Motor Racing Portuguese Grand Prix

Hill has a point to prove

Richard Williams at Estoril

DAMON HILL's long quest for the Formula One world championship will go down to the wire but at least the odds keep improving. By finishing second to his Williams team-mate and title challenger Jacques Villeneuve in the Portuguese Grand Prix here on Sunday he ensured that he needs only a single point from the final race of the season, at Suzuka next month.

One point is the margin by which Hill lost the championship to Michael Schumacher at Suzuka two years ago but the omens are better this time, despite failure here.

Hill's Williams-Renault led the race for 50 laps, with Villeneuve in close attendance, but slick work by the French-Canadian and his crew enabled him to take the lead during the third round of pit stops. He pulled away from Hill and with 16 laps to go the Englishman was warned of a clutch malfunction by his engineers and slowed up to preserve his second place. Schumacher finished third in his Ferrari, ahead of Jean Alesi's Benetton-Renault.

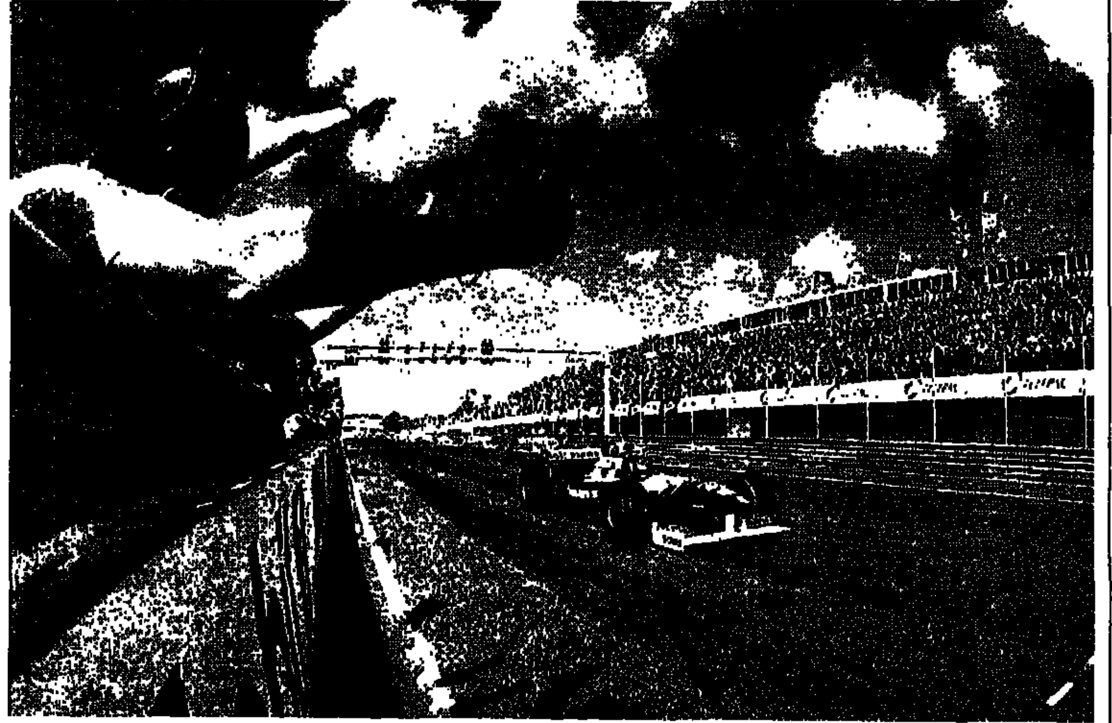
By taking the winner's 10 points to Hill's six, Villeneuve ensured that he had done just enough to keep the championship alive into the 16th and last round. He needed a four-point differential and he got it with a drive of impressive power and purpose. Now he has cut the margin to nine points, which keeps Hill just within range.

Villeneuve will need not only to win the Japanese Grand Prix but to see Hill finish lower than sixth. If Villeneuve wins and Hill takes the single point available for sixth place, they will be level on 88 points. In that case Hill will take the title by virtue of having won seven races this season to Villeneuve's five.

The supremacy of the two Williams-Renault cars was clear from start to finish of Sunday's race, as it has been since Hill began the season with three wins in a row, a sequence eventually broken by Villeneuve's debut victory. The pair have now won 11 of the season's 15 races between them, and Estoril saw a fight between equals until the clutch problem slowed the championship leader.

Hill was generous in defeat. "Jacques was flying," he said. "He drove a great race today. To come from fourth after the start to win the race is no mean feat around here. There was no way I could stay with him. And then I got a warning about the clutch problems and I had to back off."

He is becoming accustomed to the frustration. "Of course, before the race I couldn't help but think that I was within an hour and 45 minutes perhaps of becoming world champion. Now I'll have to wait until Suzuka to find out if it's going to happen. But I've waited all season. Longer than that, actually. So I can bear to wait the last three weeks. I'm looking forward to Suzuka. It should be very exciting."



Fight to the finish . . . Villeneuve wins the Portuguese Grand Prix to deny his Williams team-mate the world drivers' championship and maintain his own chance of taking the title PHOTOGRAPH: JOHN MARSH

Football Results

FA CARLING PREMIERSHIP: Aston Villa 0, Manchester Utd 0; Blackburn 1, Everton 1; Leeds 0, Newcastle 1; Liverpool 5, Chelsea 1; Middlesbrough 0, Arsenal 2; Nottingham Forest 0, West Ham 2; Sheffield Wed 0, Derby County 0; Sunderland 1, Coventry 0; Tottenham 1, Leicester 2. **Leading positions:** 1, Liverpool (played 7, points 17); 2, Newcastle (7-15); 3, Arsenal (7-14).

NATIONWIDE LEAGUE: First Division: Bradford City 2, Bolton 4; Grimsby 0, Oxford 2; Manchester City 1, Birmingham 0; Oldham 0, Barnsley 1; Portsmouth 0, Norwich 1; QPR 1, Swindon 1; Reading 1, C Palace 6; Southend 0, Port Vale 0; Stoke 3, Huddersfield 2; Tranmere 2, WBA 3; Wolves 1, Sheffield Utd 2. **Leading positions:** 1, Bolton (8-19); 2, Barnsley (7-18); 3, Norwich (8-17).

Second Division: Blackpool 1, Shrewsbury 1; Bournemouth 0, Notts County 1; Bristol City 4, Walsall 1; Bury 0, Luton 0; Chesterfield 0, Burnley 0; Gillingham 3, Rotherham 1; Millwall 2, Crewe 0; Plymouth 0, Bristol R 1; Watford 0, Peterborough 0; Wrexham 1, Preston 0; Wycombe 0, Brentford 1; York 1, Stockport 2. **Leading positions:** 1, Brentford (8-20); 2, Millwall (8-17); 3, Watford (8-16).

Third Division: Barnet 3, Exeter 0; Brighton 2, Torquay 2; Cambridge 2, Scarborough 1; Cardiff 2, Northampton 2; Carlisle 1, Darlington 0; Chester 1, Scunthorpe 0; Doncaster 0, Swansea 1; Fulham 1, Mansfield 2; Hereford 3, Rochdale 0; Hull 1, Hartlepool 0; Leyton O 1, Colchester 1; Wigan 1, Lincoln 0. **Leading positions:** 1, Fulham (8-18); 2, Wigan (8-17); 3, Carlisle (8-17).

BELLS SCOTTISH LEAGUE: Premier Division: Aberdeen 0, Hibernian 2; Celtic 5, Dunfermline 1; Hearts 1, Motherwell 1; Kilmarnock 1, Rangers 4; Raith 3, Dundee U 2. **Leading positions:** 1, Rangers (6-18); 2, Celtic (6-16); 3, Aberdeen (6-11).

SCOTTISH LEAGUE: First Division: Airdrie 4, Partick 4; Clydebank 2, St Johnstone 1; Dundee 2, East Fife 0; Stirling A 1, G Morton 3; St Mirren 0, Falkirk 1. **Leading positions:** 1, G Morton (6-13); 2, Dundee (6-11); 3, St Johnstone (5-10).

Second Division: Berwick 3, Dumbarton 1; Brechin 0, Hamilton 2; Queen South 1, Ayr 2; Stenhousemuir 0, Livingston 0, Stranraer 0, Clyde 0. **Leading positions:** 1, Livingston (6-16); 2, Hamilton (6-13); 3, Ayr (6-11).

Third Division: Albion 1, Alloa 1; Cowdenbeath 0, Ross 1; E Stirling 1, Montrose 3; Forfar 1, Arbroath 1; Inverness Thistle 2, Queen's Park 2. **Leading positions:** 1, Albion (6-14); 2, Montrose (6-10); 3, Alloa (6-9).

Cryptic crossword by Janus

Across

1 Ineffective prescription for economy (7)
5 Yield to professional dictator (7)
10 Many find support over hunt (4)
11 Award for celebrity on continent (6, 4)
12 Jacket material for one out of three boatmen (6)
13 Produce off-putting green tea (8)
14 Was Cato saved by their pleadings? (9)
16 They ruled over some rebellious Rastafarians (5)
17 Felt badly about English ships (5)
19 Displeasing kind of attack (9)
23 Gift from party to state (8)
24 Preserve a railway to the Isles? (6)
26 Still without a proposal apparently (10)
27 Call some spectator in gallery (4)
28 Gives evidence of attending top-level trials? (7)
29 Stop at spa resort for paving material (7)

Down

2 Servant who must set out with drawback (7)
3 Deceased king in after time (5)
4 Where to see a bird on the ocean (7)
6 Soldier is unable to retract (6)
7 Has little confidence in underworld business arrangements (9)
8 Formal document showing singer to possess skill (7)
9 Report may follow excessive pressure by this member (7, 6)
15 Labourer that is overapt perhaps (9)
18 Sentry's warning (7)
20 Cuts out taxes (7)
21 Barbitone boy put in meat (7)
22 Crushing defeat over bird (6)
25 In Wigan — or that direction (5)

Last week's solution

CABINET PUDDING
O A O R O E S A
UPTEMPO LITERAL
N H A W I E A L
CHILDLESS CRETE
I N L T L R
LOGOS LIABILITY
C E M O
COOKHORSE NEPAL
H O R N I I
AISLE VADEMECUM
M T I E A U T I
BOURBON BISCUIT
E M E A L E R E
REENROL EASTEND

Football Premiership: Leeds Utd 0 Newcastle Utd 1

Lessons from new testament

Martin Thorpe

FITTINGLY for clubs where football is something of a religion, Leeds United and Newcastle United have been converted. The hallowed halls of Elland Road already echo to the lesson according to George Graham, while flamboyance's greatest evangelist Kevin Keegan has finally seen the light and embraced the devil doggedness.

The only characteristics which differentiated Leeds from the Arsenal of old on Saturday were the all-white strip and the fact that they lost. Otherwise there was, like a Highbury memory, the commitment, compact formation, bodies behind the ball, long early ball forward, threat from set pieces and niggly intent.

As for Newcastle, remember Keegan's defiant boast after last season's glorious failure? "The only thing we won't ever get rid of is the style of play. As long as I'm here we'll score goals and let them in."

Well, Keegan has spent the summer like a politician quietly ignoring the party manifesto. "There's a doggedness about us now and I welcome it," he said after this fifth win in a row. "All flair and no doggedness won't win anything, as we found last year."

Saturday's victory was helped by the 39th-minute dismissal of the Leeds defender Carlton Palmer for two dubious tackles from behind. But Newcastle just about deserved their victory by keeping things tight — or as tight as one can when Asprilla is in the side — and battling hard when the 10 men, as ever, proved harder to handle than a full team of 11.

Leeds's display spoke much for the willing legs and dedicated spirit of a side sprinkled with youngsters because of injuries to Yeboah, Dorigo, Bowyer, Pemberton and Deane.

But two league defeats is not the return to the game Graham envisaged, and the team's results may take time to turn around. With the squad containing a few too many unsolicited gifts for even Graham's liking, a foray or two into the transfer market will be a priority.

The impressive Sharpe produced Leeds's best chance after seven minutes when his shot was saved by Srnicek. But slowly Newcastle turned the screw and scored the winner through Shearer, his fourth goal of the season but first from open play.

Leeds rallied and for 20 minutes in the second half dominated a game which never really came alight, going closest at corners. But Newcastle held on. A novelty indeed.

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The Guardian Weekly

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Week ending October 6, 1996

Cash for questions MP exposed as liar

Guardian Reporters

NEIL HAMILTON, the disgraced former minister, walked away in humiliation from a £10 million libel suit against the Guardian over the "cash for questions" scandal hours before the case was due to start on Tuesday.

The former trade minister abandoned the case and agreed to pay some of the Guardian's costs after a bitter two-year battle. He had recruited 421 Conservative MPs and peers, including Lady Thatcher, Lord Archer and cabinet members to change a 300-year-old law, which had prevented him, as an MP, bringing his action.

Ian Greer, the parliamentary lobbyist, also dropped his claim, part of the same libel suit, just minutes before a legal deadline to do so. He, too, agreed to pay some of the newspaper's costs.

The Guardian stated on October 20, 1994, that Mr Hamilton had received thousands of pounds for asking parliamentary questions for Mohamed Al Fayed's Harrods group. Mr Greer, who had been retained by Mr Al Fayed, was identified as the middleman.

Another MP, Tim Smith, resigned his post as a Northern Ireland minister after he was accused in the same article of taking undeclared cash. He immediately admitted the Guardian story was true. Mr Hamilton, MP for Tatton, had instead tried to tough it out before resigning under pressure from Mr Major.

The settlement, on the eve of what was labelled the libel trial of the century, came after a dramatic weekend of legal developments. Those began when the Government disclosed crucial documents to the Guardian. The papers led to Mr Greer and Mr Hamilton falling out, and a conflict of interest developing. Mr Greer's accounts were also in the newspaper's possession.

The Guardian also served on the men's lawyers three statements from employees of Mr Al Fayed. They said Mr Hamilton and Mr Greer regularly called for envelopes stuffed with £50 notes in return for parliamentary lobbying.

Alan Rusbridger, editor of the Guardian, said: "The decision by Neil Hamilton and Ian Greer must be one of the most astonishing legal cave-ins in the history of the law of libel."

He called for the trial papers to be examined by John Major, Sir Gordon Downey, the Parliamentary Commissioner for Standards, and the Inland Revenue.

Although hampered by the law on what evidence it can publish, the Guardian on Tuesday revealed the extent of Mr Hamilton's covert links with Mr Greer. It also detailed the network of MPs linked to Mr Greer, including Mr Smith, Sir Michael Grylls, chairman of the backbench trade and industry committee, Sir Peter Hordern, MP for Horsham, and Sir Andrew Bowden, MP for Brighton Kemptown.

It was because the Guardian had subpoenaed Mr Major and Michael Heseltine to give evidence in the case that the Government handed over key documents to the newspaper's lawyers, Geoffrey Robertson, QC, and Geraldine Proudler. It would have been the first time this century a serving Prime Minister had appeared in the libel courts.

The trial would have re-opened the vexed question of parliamentary sleaze during the Tory party conference, and only a year after the Government had made strenuous efforts to bury the issue. It implemented the Nolan Committee report and appointed a new Parliamentary Commissioner for Standards to handle complaints about MPs.

Of the embarrassing climb-down by both men, Mr Rusbridger said: "Both Hamilton and Greer knew that the evidence the Guardian had obtained would have blown their action out of the water and revealed a pattern of parliamentary sleaze more far-reaching than anyone had ever imagined.

"The Guardian has never doubted the truth of its original story. We would have produced damning evidence of Mr Hamilton and Mr Greer's lack of integrity if the case had proceeded. No doubt that is why they dropped the action."

Mr Hamilton said he was "devastated" at having to withdraw. He claimed he was innocent, but because of the conflict of interest with Mr Greer, each had to instruct new solicitors and counsel.

Mr Hamilton's costs were already £150,000, and he did not have the cash to continue.

Downing Street on Monday night insisted that the end of the libel action was purely a "matter between Mr Hamilton and the Guardian".

Web of greed, page 9



A wounded Palestinian is carried away in the West Bank town of Ramallah after Israeli troops shot at stone throwers and Palestinian policemen returned fire. Fifty-four Palestinians and 14 Israelis were killed in fierce clashes over three days last week. *Full story, page 3*

Middle East peace in the balance

COMMENT
Martin Woollacott

THE illusion that there can be security without justice, with which Binyamin Netanyahu seduced Israelis in the last election, lies shattered in the streets of Gaza and Ramallah. Netanyahu promised Israelis that they could have security, the physical safety they naturally crave after generations in the firing line, and yet pay no price for it either in land or in changes in the political status of Palestinians.

His mendacity or self-delusion is now clear for all to see. But the failure is not his alone. It is ironic that in the centennial year of Zionism — Theodor Herzl's The Jewish State was published in February 1896 — Zionism in its Likud variant should persist so blindly in the denial to Palestinians of the human and political rights which Jews in Israel have so vigorously demanded for themselves. Where Herzl once saw his imagined Israelis chatting in German in Viennese-style cafés, with grateful Arabs in the background, their sons grapple in combat with Palestinian enemies. What Netanyahu and his government refuse to see, with not a shred of the excuses that can be offered for the early Zionists, is that one state evoked another, and until the Palestinian state is as much a reality as the Jewish one, there can be no guarantee of security. Perhaps not even then, but not until then.

When Netanyahu made it clear, during the campaign and after his victory, that he had not changed his absolutely negative position on Palestinian statehood, he all but pulled out the keystone from the arch of peace. If he does not soon radically change that policy, the arch will fall, with ruinous consequences for the Middle East and all who live there.

This would not be a resumption of the old occupation, or even of the intifada. Neither the practical co-operation which marked the one nor the relative restraint which marked the other are recoverable now. Full-scale fighting between Israeli forces and some or all of Yasser Arafat's armed units, with or without his approval, is entirely possible now, or later, if after some temporary patching up, there is no change of Israeli policy. It would be an unequal war, no doubt, but one terrifying in its results, because, once that kind of blood has been spilt, all the structures and leaders upon which peace could be based would have been swept away.

Netanyahu's churlish refusal to see Arafat, then a hasty meeting, under American pressure, dressed up as a success, the faltering of the day-to-day contacts on which the peace process as a practical matter depended, the failure to move Israeli troops, as promised, out of Hebron, the announcement of new settlements, the closing of Palestinian offices and a youth centre in Jerusalem — these were deliberate signals intended to convey one thing and one thing only: that there would be no state and no Palestinian capital in East Jerusalem. Only idiots or amateurs could have supposed that this would not lead, and lead pretty swiftly, to a Palestinian explosion. Unfortunately, both are present among Netanyahu's circle of advisers.

His own reponsibility is great. The bankruptcy of the Likud tradition, only incipient under Begin and Shamir and masked by military adventures and diplomatic stonewalling, is now full-blown under Netanyahu. Vladmir Jabotinsky.

continued on page 3

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US foreign policy weakness exposed 6
Kabul succumbs to Islamists 7
Women targets of torture in Egypt 23
Why Iris Murdoch is lost for words 28

Austria	AS30	Malta	45c
Belgium	BF75	Netherlands	G 4 75
Denmark	DK16	Norway	NK 10
Finland	FM 10	Portugal	E300
France	FF 13	Saudi Arabia	SR 6.50
Germany	DM 4	Spain	P 300
Greece	DR 400	Sweden	SK 19
Italy	L 3,000	Switzerland	SF 3.30

Arkan hides behind his puppet master

THE FACT that Arkan claims to be no war criminal (September 29) is, of course, entirely unsurprising. There are very few war criminals in history who have admitted their guilt.

What is outrageous is that he can cite the fact that he has not been indicted by the War Crimes Tribunal in the Hague as "evidence" for his innocence. The reason for this is obvious: key players in the international community, first and foremost the British government, don't want to see him on trial as he is a key ally of Serbia's President Milosevic, the top war criminal, who was made the centrepiece of the "solution" imposed on Bosnia at Dayton. He and other warlords were the tools that allowed Milosevic to create the impression, supported subsequently by the British government, that Bosnia was a chaotic civil war rather than a calculated campaign of expansion and genocide aimed at "Greater Serbia".

Having achieved the maximum territorial gain possible at the time, Milosevic offered himself as the "peacemaker", and his puppet Arkan adopts his politics accordingly. Arkan's letter could have been written for him by Milosevic's government. Dayton suits him well as it will prove unworkable, and Greater Serbia, he can be quite sure, will become a reality in the long run. No need at the moment for his "tigers" to kill more innocent civilians, but time to try and re-write history.

The important point about Bosnia is that no wrongful act had been committed by the national government in seceding, and neither was there a campaign by the Bosnian authorities to harm any ethnic group in any way.

In short, there was no reason why the Serb minority should have been unable to pursue its political aims by peaceful means. Yet leading Serbian politicians decided to use aggression and genocide to create Greater Serbia. This is why Messrs Arkan, Milosevic and others of their ilk should appear in The Hague.

I've heard that, at some point during the war, the Bosnian government thought about bringing a suit under the 1948 Genocide Convention against the UK for failing to prevent persons from committing acts of genocide. That would have been a case against a key player, not a puppet like Arkan.
Christian Wisshirchen,
London

A RECENT edition of ABC-TV's Nightline included a feature on the efforts to dig up and identify atrocity victims in Bosnia, an expression of concern that brought to mind the hundreds of thousands of Vietnamese civilians — peasants, women, and children — murdered by the US government in the 1960s and '70s whose fate was never accounted for, certainly not by any such careful international investigation.

There is no sign that state criminals such as Milosevic will ever be brought to justice. What is urgently needed in the Balkans is not just human rights investigations but society-wide adult education. This could, and should, be a major project for all the other countries of Europe, which have, so far, done so little to help their deeply troubled Slavic neighbours.
R V MacLeod,
Sirdar, BC, Canada

Home truths for Australia

YOUR ARTICLE, (Australia resists human rights clause, September 22) illustrates the double standards of the Canberra government: it wants its trading partners to uphold basic human rights in their territories; yet it fails dismally in this respect in regard to its own indigenous population. It appears that 208 years of punitive ostracism could be prolonged. However, Aborigines long ago learned how to survive, and their population is said to be increasing.

Although Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders were granted citizenship only as recently as 1967 — and won a High Court decision early this decade proving their occupancy here prior to Cook's landing, and establishing their land claims — abuse of Aborigines' rights by the state continues unabated, despite an earlier Royal Commission investigation into this uncivilised practice.

As the original inhabitants of this vast continent, many of our people still live in remote areas where adequate domestic water supplies, allowing for basic personal and community hygiene and medical services, are unavailable. One of the results of this is inadequate provision of post-natal care, often leading to premature deaths among the very young.

The abject carelessness of the Australian people transcends party politics: this means governments can, and do, give priority to the wants of non-Aborigines over and above my long-neglected people.
Jack Kennedy,
Former vice-president, Aboriginal Deaths in Custody Watch Committee,
Sydney, Australia

THE PROPOSED European Union agreement with Australia has received very little news coverage here, and the basis of the Canberra government's objections to the human rights clause is not clear to me. Certainly, it does seem paradoxical that this country, with its reputation for freedom, should have difficulty with the clause, while others with a poor reputation have no difficulty.

However, the main reason must be that here in Australia conflicts with Aborigines have arisen that seem intractable — a situation not dissimilar to that of Northern Ireland. The present government is therefore being scrupulously honest in saying that it cannot accept the terms offered, and, furthermore, resents EU interference in its domestic affairs.

The abusers of human rights in Asia have no such scruples.
Edward S Webber,
Cairns, Queensland, Australia

Eye for an eye is no solution

THE REPORT by John Simpson (Violence rules in divided Mogadishu, September 22) was shocking. Equally shocking was his last statement: "We may not like the *sharia* courts and the punishments they inflict (ie, amputations and lashes for petty theft), but nothing the supposedly civilised world can come up with has worked as well."

Is Mr Simpson implying that the West should also try these punishments? Is he suggesting that oppression is justified in the name of a "quietened street"? If so, then he would also consider these harsh punishments appropriate for those responsible for creating the disadvantaged situations that many thousands of people are forced into. Would he sanction, accordingly, 48 lashes for the directors of large firms who lay off hundreds, sometimes thousands of workers just to make an extra billion in profit per year?

Would he recommend cutting off the right hand of employers who pay such low wages that thousands are forced into poverty? Governments steal from students through cutbacks; landlords steal from renters through increases in rent; and large firms steal from us all by paying less than their share of taxes.

It is true that the West has never "come up with" an effective strategy for fighting crime, but that is because greed blocks the will. When it finally occurs to the West that better wages for all (not just for the rich) lead to "quietened streets" then it might also be realised that oppression of all kinds is primitive.
S M Fillmore,
Zürich, Switzerland

Tough beat for WPCs

MAGGIE O'KANE'S piece (WPC Blues, September 1) is a powerful example of the institutionalised hypocrisy that exists in Britain today. The sophisticated defence mechanisms and structures of acquiescence that exist in British society result in behaviour of this type.

It takes brave individuals to face up to corruption and deceit, whether in police departments or in other organisations, be they big or small. Cowards on the other hand hide behind procedure, crowd mentality, and abusive posturing. Men perpetrating these acts could maybe stop and ask themselves why they chose to behave in this way, and what they are so angry about.
Malcolm Davidson,
New York, USA

HAVING just read the article on WPCs, I am amazed to read of the behaviour of the male policemen towards these women with whom they work. After all, female police officers have been serving the public since about 1918.

I served in the London Metropolitan Police for four years during the 1940s and realise this may relegate me to the age of the dinosaur. However I have to say, although I was young and considered to be fairly attractive, I was not intimidated in any way by the male members of the force — in fact, I felt very secure.

The current attitude of the male PCs towards the WPCs causes me to wonder at the calibre of the men now being recruited to police forces — if they cannot cope with the WPCs in a mature fashion, how can they cope with the public?

It is a very sad day when the complaints of the WPCs have not been dealt with. I commend them for bringing the information to the attention of the public and I wish them well.
Vendla M Amy,
Calgary, Canada

Please include a full postal address, even on e-mailed letters

Briefly

ANY prospective candidate for the priesthood knows full well that abstinence from sex and marriage is asked of him (Church 'betrayed by Judas bishop', September 29). It is also well known that some will fail, and they need our sympathy and prayers. But this does not mean that the abolition of celibacy will have people flocking back to church.

If blame were to be placed anywhere for the decline of religious practices, it is certainly not related to celibacy, contraception or the lack of female priests. The Church of England has allowed all of these and continues to decline.
F Pock,
Mickle Trafford, Chester

WHAT is needed is an unequivocal policy towards Iraq and the peoples of Kurdistan in order that both they and Saddam Hussein know where the US stands.

The knee-jerk reaction of Bob Dole, advocating the rejection of "986", the oil-for-food resolution, is fundamentally misconceived. Resolution 986, under the supervision of some 200 UN monitors, will bring food and medicine to the 4 million Iraqis, including Kurds, who are destitute. These are the people we need to be supporting if we genuinely wish to see an end to Saddam.
Clive Furness,
Campaign Against Repression & for Democratic Rights in Iraq, London

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FUNNY thing. I had actually believed that the "New Labour, New Danger" poster showed the frightened eyes of a Tory MP looking out from the darkness where he was totting up his assets. But then I was never very good at semiotics.
E Townley,
Bedlington, Northumbria

I USED to visit Orlando in Florida regularly. I keep a cutting from the Orlando Sentinel of May 26, 1992 which reads: "Computer runs on firearm records indicate the loaded gun in your house is 43 times more likely to kill you or a member of your family than to stand off some intruder."
Michael Melville,
Cuddington, Northwich, Cheshire

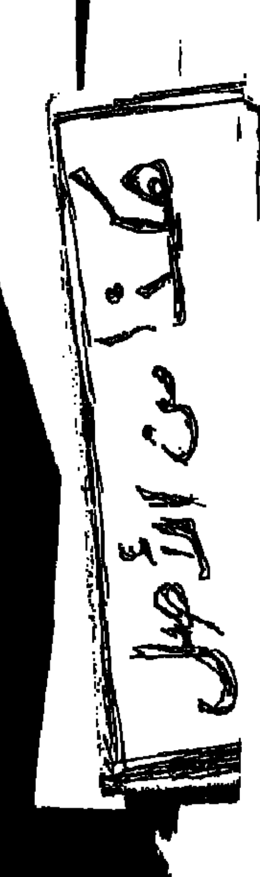
ELLEN GOODMAN'S article (Flamethrowers anonymous, September 15) makes excellent sense. Courtesy and civility are commodities that seem to be disappearing from everyday life, except in small and closely-knit communities.

She names the sin — cowardice — that makes us ruder to the stranger than to our own, and rudest of all when there is no chance of being called to account.
W A Sturgess,
Toronto, Canada

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Supporters of Vazgen Manukyan, the former prime minister and leader of the Armenian opposition, raise their hands at a rally held in Yerevan against alleged government vote-rigging PHOTOGRAPH: JOHN HOULTHAN

Armenia crackdown follows poll-rigging claim

Lawrence Sheets in Yerevan

THE Armenian President Levon Ter-Petrosyan, re-elected last week, is using recent unrest over claims of vote-rigging to imprison political opponents and stifle dissent, diplomats based in the capital Yerevan said on Monday.

Diplomats and opposition politicians say that up to 250 people have been detained since the unrest, some of whom had nothing to do with the recent protests. Others have gone into hiding.

The Armenian interior ministry could not comment, and the chief prosecutor, Suren Gyosalyan, said he knew nothing about large-scale arrests. "We've only given nine arrest orders," he said. "I do not know who has been arrested."

At the weekend Mr Ter-Petrosyan was declared official winner of the presidential election with 51.8 percent of the vote, just enough to avoid a runoff with his challenger, Vazgen Manukyan.

International monitors noted some irregularities and said they could have influenced the result in Mr Ter-Petrosyan's favour. Mr Manukyan says the president rigged the vote.

Mr Ter-Petrosyan has called a violent demonstration by thousands of unarmed Manukyan supporters in which some of them stormed the parliament building and beat up the Speaker as a "fascist" coup by "mentally ill people".

A Western diplomat said: "We are talking about a very substantial number of people who have been put in prison. We are extremely concerned about this and will be asking the government for an explanation." Many diplomats said it appeared that the government had let the protest get out of control to be able to clamp down and avoid opposition calls for a recount.

At least two opposition parties, including Mr Manukyan's National Democratic Union (NDU) and the smaller National Self-Determination Union (NDSU) have been closed down. Their offices are now guarded by government security forces. The NDSU headquarters were attacked last week, and armed men severely beat about 10 people in the building before dragging them into a police van.

Parliamentary deputy Aramzad Zakanyan, a parliamentary deputy and former NDSU member, said from a hospital bed that he had been beaten and had spent two days in detention. "I passed by the NDSU headquarters on the way, where there were a bunch of armed men standing. After I went inside the building . . . a group of men . . . began beating me from all sides with clubs or their fists," he said.

Mr Zakanyan, who has a fractured skull, a broken rib and facial lacerations, said he was beaten again at a police holding centre. He was released after two days. Relatives brought him to the hospital.

Wives and relatives of people who have been arrested sent an appeal to the United Nations over the weekend demanding it put pressure on the government to release political detainees. — *Reuter*

US summit to halt outbreak of war

Derek Brown in Jerusalem

ISRAEL came to the brink of open war with the Palestinians last week. In scenes reminiscent of the worst of the intifada, Israeli troops shot at stone-throwers in the West Bank town of Ramallah. This time Palestinian police fired back with automatic weapons as the clash degenerated into a new and uglier conflict.

The Israeli troops' intervention in Ramallah, one of the Palestinian self-rule enclaves, was the first big incursion since limited self-government by the Palestine Liberation Organisation was established more than two years ago.

There were also clashes in the West Bank town of Bethlehem, where Israeli troops and Palestinian police exchanged fire, witnesses said. More fierce clashes erupted in the Gaza Strip, where Israel used helicopter gunships to attack Palestinian rioters. Gunfire at Jerusalem's most holy Islamic shrine, the al-Aqsa mosque, brought the death toll in three days to 68 — 54 Palestinians and 14 Israelis.

Security forces sealed off the West Bank and Gaza Strip to prevent further flare-ups.

The worst clashes since the start of self-rule erupted after widespread protests about Israel's latest move to underline its exclusive control of Jerusalem: the reopening to tourists of an entrance to an ancient tunnel near the most revered mosque in the Holy Land. Palestinians say the tunnel could undermine the Haram al-Sharif, on which stand the Dome of the Rock and the al-Aqsa mosque.

The arcane dispute has become the focus for Palestinian frustration with a peace process which has halted since the May 29 election of a rightwing Likud government under Binyamin Netanyahu.

Following the clashes, there were intense diplomatic efforts to persuade Mr Netanyahu and the Palestinian leader, Yasser Arafat, to retrieve the crumbling peace deal between their peoples. As the United Nations met in crisis session last week, the US State Department mounted a blitz of telephone diplomacy, with urgent calls to the Israeli and Palestinian leaders to see reason. As a result of the diplomatic pressure, Middle Eastern leaders converged on the US capital on Monday for a hastily-arranged White House summit designed to revive the teetering peace process — amid signs of Arab disunity and European fears of an American cave-in to Israel.

After a day of frantic shuttling and last-minute demands for a delay, Mr Netanyahu, Mr Arafat and King Hussein of Jordan all headed to the US, summoned by President Clinton. Speaking at a press conference after a meeting with European Union foreign ministers in Luxembourg, Mr Arafat confirmed he would fly on to the Washington summit. "I am not asking for the moon. I am asking for what was agreed but what has yet to be fulfilled," he said.

In an apparent rift with Mr Arafat — who spent Monday in talks in Egypt — the Egyptian president, Hosni Mubarak, declined to attend the summit. At the heart of the new disunity are Arab fears that the summit will focus exclusively on Israeli security concerns, at the expense of Palestinian demands for momentum to be restored to the peace process.

But US officials insisted on Monday that Washington had no agenda other than to end the violence and get the peace process back on track. "We think the United States has the ability to get them talking again," said Nicholas Burns, a spokesman for the State Department.

Speculation intensified that the most tangible result of the meeting would be a commitment from Mr Netanyahu to go ahead with Israel's partial withdrawal from the volatile West Bank town of Hebron. The pullout, originally promised for March, has been repeatedly put off.

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Peace in the balance

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father of what became the Likud tradition, famously spoke of the "iron wall". This was the idea that after throwing themselves endlessly at the ramparts of Israeli strength, the Arabs would eventually recognise that they were in a position of permanent weakness and would negotiate accordingly.

In a way that has proved correct. The Arabs, including the Palestinians, *have* negotiated from a position of weakness. But the sting in the tail has been that, in the end, the Palestinians are still there, still angry, and still dangerous.

It was Netanyahu who was the prophet of the "easy" version of the iron wall. He sold a fable to the more gullible among the Israeli people, distressed that, in spite of peace, Israelis were still dying. This was that "security" could be had, with no price to be paid and no dangers to be endured. The settlements could stay and be expanded, the Palestinians could be denied a state. Seeing the Palestinian Authority essentially as nothing more than a defective instrument of Israeli security, he naturally proposed that nothing more be conceded to it, and demanded that it come up to scratch, as if it were a mercenary police force falling down on the job.

What emerged then, at the tail end of the Likud tradition, was a bastard version which held that security could be had without costs or casualties. It did not envisage the full-scale re-occupation of the territories. That would be too expensive in lives and money and there would also be diplomatic costs. But, by some magic, the Palestinians would go along with not getting a state and would take no revenge. What was this magic? The answer is pitiful. It was "peace with security". Having virtually nothing to give to the Palestinians, except some economic crumbs, all that could be promised was to trade off Israeli security for Palestinian security. If you don't hurt us, we won't hurt you, also known as We will hurt you if you hurt us. If wars could be ended like this, there would not be a violent spot on the globe.

What is so mindless about this approach is its asymmetry. Jews of course need land, a state, self-esteem and pride. But Palestinians — they, of course, can make do with physical safety alone.

Israel still has the possibility, even under Netanyahu to take up the Palestinian offer. The Palestinians are ready to make peace on the basis of a minimal restitution of what was taken from them.

Less than half, perhaps less than a third, of the land that was once Palestinian, and the possibility of erecting on this restricted basis a small state. It is symptomatic of the cast of mind of too many Israelis, Labour as well as Likud, that such an offer cannot been seen for what it is — amazing, unprecedented, almost incredible.

Do all Palestinians subscribe to it? Of course not. Do even those who do nevertheless see it as a first step toward other objectives, such as securing a right of return to Israel, or cherish inward hopes that over time demography may change the balance of power in the Holy Land? Of course they do. Yet what is on offer is still astonishing. It is madness for the Israelis to refuse it.

Strikes spur Paris on jobs

Paul Webster in Paris

THE French government tried to stem a growing tide of social unrest by declaring on Monday that it would instruct local councils and voluntary associations to create 300,000 jobs for those receiving income support and other benefits.

The announcement — intended to fulfil President Jacques Chirac's election promise to heal France's "social fracture" — coincided with a strike by teachers over redundancies and sporadic protests before a public sector strike planned for later this month.

During a visit to northern France, Mr Chirac has been trying to restore confidence by praising initiatives to increase local responsibility for job creation for the worst-off by transforming some income support into salaries.

In May last year, Mr Chirac said it was no longer acceptable that a "wounded and vulnerable France" was paying for a previous reluctance to solve the problems of social exclusion. But despite his renewed call for national solidarity, no new contributions will be demanded of the rich to help create jobs.

Le Monde dismissed the measures, which will provide funds for wages by ending some types of benefit, as "taking from the poor to give to the poorest".

The plan acknowledges that it will be five years before local initiatives create work for the 300,000 poorest citizens. The 27,000 new jobs available next year are unlikely to have much impact on the March 1998 general elections, which opinion polls say will be won by the left.

According to state figures, 12 million French people live precariously, with the young worse off than 10 years ago.

As it has become clear that the government has no miracle solution to fend off the threat of another autumn of paralysing strikes, Mr Chirac has been trying to silence critics among his own rightwing supporters. They feel that the Gaullist prime minister, Alain Juppé, has botched the economic recovery and should go.

Bosnia leaders move ahead stiffly

Julian Borger in Sarajevo

BOSNIA began to take on its post-war shape on Monday as a triumvirate of freshly-elected nationalist leaders met in a motel on the outskirts of Sarajevo for the first session of the collective presidency.

It was a low-key and awkward affair. The three participants arrived under heavy security from different directions and at different times, after Alija Izetbegovic — the Muslim leader and chairman of the presidency — raised last-minute objections about the venue.

The other members of the presidency — the Bosnian Serb leader, Momcilo Krajisnik, and the prominent Croat nationalist, Kresimir Zubak — were kept waiting nearly an hour while foreign diplomats persuaded Mr Izetbegovic to drive the kilometre from the centre of town to the motel above the Miljacka river.

The meeting was intended to be the first step towards creating power-sharing institutions to hold Bosnia together, after three-and-a-half years of murderous conflict.

Significant differences remain between the three leaders' visions of Bosnia's future. There is not even agreement on the oath of office to be used when the presidency is formally inaugurated, an event tentatively scheduled for the weekend.

The session was held behind closed doors. International observers described the atmosphere as workmanlike as the adversaries finally came together for a first informal encounter hosted by the international community's representative, Carl Bildt. Mr Bildt said later that the leaders had shaken hands.

The three leaders will have to map out Bosnia's future, following elections last month which gave huge majorities to nationalist wartime leaders from the three communities.

In the next few weeks, they are supposed to appoint a council of ministers and implement a "quick-start" package of measures designed to embody the highly decentralised state which has emerged from 43 months of war. The measures have to be approved by a multi-ethnic, 42-seat house of representatives which is expected to convene in central Sarajevo within 10 days.

Authority was formally transferred to the tripartite presidency at the weekend, when the results of the election were formally approved by the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) despite allegations made by independent observers of fraud and ballot-stuffing.

The decision ended days of haggling over voting irregularities and cleared the way for the formation of a new government institution envisaged by the Dayton peace pact.

The timing of this first encounter of Bosnian leaders had been in doubt because of differences over the venue. Mr Krajisnik had refused to come to a meeting in central Sarajevo, within the Muslim-Croat federation, because of fears for his safety. Mr Izetbegovic would not meet on the former front line as the Serbs suggested.

The Saraj motel represented a compromise. It is just over a kilometre inside federation territory on the road which runs along the side of a gorge from Sarajevo to the Serb headquarters in Pale.

The Week

SRI LANKA'S army captured the Tamil Tigers' northern stronghold of Kilinochchi, the last big town under the control of the separatist rebels, after a seven-day siege in which more than 700 combatants were killed.

A MEDICAL investigation into the police killing of Murtaza Bhutto, the brother of the Pakistani prime minister, has exposed lies in the police account of the shooting.

TOP heart surgeons said they could operate safely on President Yeltsin and that he stood a good chance of making a complete recovery. But the medical team made it clear that Russia would be without the full-time services of its head of state until early next year.

A VINTAGE DC-3 Dakota, carrying members of the Dutch Dakota Association, crashed in the North Sea off the Dutch coast, killing 32 people on board.

EUGENE DE KOCK, the self-confessed head of a police assassination squad, told the supreme court in Pretoria he had evidence that South African security services were responsible for the murder of the Swedish prime minister, Olof Palme, in 1986.

ASTRONAUT Shannon Lucid returned to Earth on the space shuttle Atlantis after a record six months in orbit — the longest space flight by a woman.
Washington Post, page 16

SWITZERLAND'S lower house of parliament voted for a sweeping study of financial dealings with Nazi Germany and the fate of Jewish wealth deposited before, during and after the second world war.

A TEAM of 50 Greek commandos has been sent to patrol the Corfu coastline to counter pirates after Keith Hedley, a Kent businessman, was killed and London warned British tourists to avoid local marinas between dusk and dawn.

A REPORT to the Italian parliament reveals that the number of women charged with belonging to the Sicilian Mafia had gone up to 89 in 1995 from just one five years earlier.

THE first person to die using legally sanctioned euthanasia was a former pilot who used a computer-driven "death machine" in Darwin, in Australia's Northern Territory.

SABINE Zlatin, a Red Cross nurse known for more than 50 years as La Dame d'Izieu, for saving many young Jews from the Gestapo and placing them with French families or religious establishments, has died aged 89.

Britain seeks to punish Burma's junta

Agencies

BRITAIN said on Monday that international action was needed against the Burmese government after it had stopped Aung San Suu Kyi, the opposition leader and Nobel peace laureate, from delivering a speech at the weekend.

"The UK believes it will be necessary to take further international action against the Slorc [Burma's ruling State Law and Order Council]," a Foreign Office statement said. "We will be proposing possible measures to European Union partners."

A Foreign Office source said Britain would raise the subject of possible action at a meeting of senior EU officials in Brussels this week. He declined to say what action Britain would propose.

Checkpoints were set up on roads leading to Ms Suu Kyi's Rangoon residence last week to prevent a three-day congress of her National League for Democracy.

A spokesman for the Slorc said 559 people are being detained.

Britain's ambassador in Rangoon has been asked to raise the matter with the government.

The US State Department called on Rangoon to release all imprisoned pro-democracy supporters. Spokesman Nicholas Burns urged the Burmese to open a dialogue with Ms Suu Kyi and her allies on Burma's political future.

Seiroku Kajiyama, a spokesman for the Japanese government, Burma's biggest aid donor, said: "The freedom of political parties to conduct their activities must be recognised." Japan suspended big aid projects after crackdowns on pro-democracy campaigners in 1988.

Denmark has been pressing for sanctions against Burma since its unaccredited honorary consul in Rangoon, James Nichols, died in June in what it claims were suspicious circumstances. Nichols was arrested in April and sentenced to three years in prison for operating telephones and fax machines without permission.

Britain has previously opposed sanctions unless they can be agreed at the United Nations. However, Britain cancelled a trade mission to Rangoon earlier this year.

A fierce-looking inflatable tomato startles passers-by in front of the Brandenburg Gate in Berlin last week. It was placed there by Bund, the German environment and nature conservation organisation, in protest at gene manipulation of food
PHOTOGRAPH: HANS EDINGER

NZ leader accused of scaremongering

Giles Wilson in Wellington

NEW ZEALAND opposition leaders this week accused the prime minister, Jim Bolger, of using scare tactics amounting to "political treason" to try to hold on to power in the country's October 12 election.

Mr Bolger, whose conservative National Party risks losing power to a group of left and centre-left parties in New Zealand's first ballot under a proportional representation system, urged foreign investors to be cautious about putting money into the country until the election outcome is clear.

Asked in an Australian television interview at the weekend what assurances he could give investors worried by political uncertainty, he replied: "I can only say that their uncertainty or their question mark at this stage, two weeks out, is totally understandable." Mr Bolger said that, if he were an overseas investor, he would "just wait two weeks" to see if a sensible coalition emerged.

No one was likely to invest in New Zealand if the leftwing Alliance was at the forefront of a coalition, and many New Zealanders would think about leaving for Australia, he said. "Let me say to Australians, if we get some of the loopy policies of the left come in to New Zealand again, you will get a whole lot of Kiwis over there in a hurry."

Opposition leaders expressed outrage at the remarks. "What could be more irresponsible than to warn foreign investors not to invest in New Zealand before the general election?" the Labour leader, Helen Clark, said in a statement. The implication was that foreigners should not invest at all if there was a change of government, she said.

Winston Peters, the leader of the economic nationalist New Zealand First party, said: "It's political treason . . . and could be economic treason were it not for the fact the Aussies are not as dumb as Jim Bolger.

"He is behaving like a spoilt brat. He is saying: 'I have to be prime minister or things will be disastrous.' Well, people are saying they are disastrous now and we don't want you to be prime minister."

Latest polls indicate that the National Party will be the largest party in the next parliament but without an overall majority. Labour is unlikely to get more than 20 per cent support.

A delay of days, or even weeks, is expected before post-election bargaining produces a government.

Among the four main parties — National, Labour, the Alliance and New Zealand First — the only natural coalition partners would be Labour and the Alliance. However, the Alliance was formed in the first place by breakaway Labour MPs unhappy at their party's rightwing agenda in the 1980s, so a coalition seems unlikely.

David Lange, the former Labour prime minister who has retired as an MP, used his farewell address to parliament to call for rapprochement on the left. Many people believe that, until this happens, the left will not govern again.

Holding the balance of power in the new order are the minority parties excluded under the first-past-the-post system. Free-marketeers, Greens, or Christians, they need only 5 per cent of the vote or a constituency seat to become key players.

Blood-filled eyes see only pain

Chris McGreal hears the appalling story of four Hutu sisters in Taba

JOSEPHINE MUKANKUSI recalls a time before Jean-Paul Akayesu became mayor of her hillside commune, when he used to drop around for a drink at her house. "Akayesu was a friend of my husband. They grew up together. He knew our children. We thought he was a good man. The same people who drank at our wedding murdered my family," she said.

Last week Akayesu became the first Hutu accused of genocide for the slaughter of Tutsis in Rwanda in 1994 to go on trial before an international tribunal.

Josephine is one of four Hutu sisters who married Tutsi men. Despite Rwanda's age-old divisions, mixed marriages were relatively common around Taba. Akayesu happily swilled beer with Josephine's husband, Edouard. But that was before the Tutsi rebel invasion of Rwanda in 1990 threw the loyalties of all Tutsis into question. By then Akayesu was mayor and the local leader of a hardline Hutu party.

In April 1994, war turned to genocide. As Hutus turned on their Tutsi neighbours, and Akayesu creaked the engine of mass murder into gear in his commune, he appeared again at Josephine's door. "He said to stay calm and nothing would happen to us. Now I think he meant to confuse us," she said.

Josephine, Edouard and their six children fled before their neighbours destroyed their home and the Hutu militia, the Interahamwe, began its hunt for Tutsi men. The militiamen were mostly drunken young thugs. Some wore women's clothes or wigs. They carried machetes or wooden clubs studded with nails. Invariably they were led by the educated members of the community. But Akayesu gave the orders.

"We were hiding in the bush but my husband was afraid he would attract the Interahamwe who would kill the children, so he left," Josephine said. "He was looking for a hiding place when the Interahamwe grabbed him. They led him to a pit latrine and stabbed him with sharpened sticks and beat him with machetes. He was alive when they threw him in. Then they threw stones at him until he died."

Josephine and her children sought shelter in the house of one of the killers, though he didn't know it.

"My aunt gave us a bed but her husband was an Interahamwe who spent most of the day killing. In the evening, when the husband returned, I would hide in the plantation. We stayed there for six weeks."

One of Josephine's younger sisters, Vestine, had also found shelter in the house of a killer — a Hutu soldier, a friend of her husband. Interahamwe militiamen came looking for her husband, Bernard. He fled to his brother-in-law's house. Simon Bivahagumye offered to help him find somewhere safe. The two men set off at night but soon ran into the Interahamwe. Money changed hands. Bernard ran. Simon went home.

Hutu militiamen descended on Simon's house. He was accused of hiding Bernard, and the Interahamwe shot Simon, his wife and two sons. Josephine made for her parents' house. The roadblocks were terrifying. Tutsis were hacked to pieces next to the barricades.

Two days after she reached her parents' home a group of men knocked on the door and demanded Josephine's three-year-old son. "They marched me to the hill and took the baby from my back. Then they killed him in front of me," she said.

All four sisters and their 14 children ended up at their parents' house. As the Tutsi rebel Rwandan Patriotic Front drew closer to Taba, the sisters showed the older children how to hide themselves in the banana groves. The youngest were told that if strangers came, they were to hide in cupboards or under beds.

One visitor worried everyone — Josephine's only brother, Malachias, lived nearby and manned the roadblocks where so many Tutsis met their end. Soon the first men came knocking, often led by Akayesu and the mayor of a neighbouring commune, Jean Mbarubukeye.

Vestine's husband was still on the run. Word spread that he was passing secret messages to the Tutsi rebels. Yet when the militiamen found him at the home of a brother-in-law he was alone and defenceless.

"As they led him to the main barrier they were cutting him with machetes. He was badly hurt and bleeding. He hit Silas, the president of the Interahamwe. The bodyguards shot him dead. I think he attacked Silas so they would kill him quickly," Vestine said.

Bernard's death spurred Akayesu into a last hunt for the children. Silas was at his side. He wanted Vestine to pay. Malachias joined the mob. As the machete-waving crowd neared, the children ran to their hiding places. Josephine had gone to buy food. Vestine was outside.

"Akayesu pointed me out to Silas. They beat me, and my father for offering his daughters to the Tutsis. My eyes filled with blood," she said.

But Vestine could see her brother pointing out the children's hiding places. They came out from under beds, out from the banana groves. Akayesu told the children they were going for a treat. The older children picked up the small ones and began walking to the barricade.

The 14 children were clubbed and cut to pieces. They were almost certainly dead by the time they were thrown into the pit latrines.

● The international tribunal on Rwanda opened briefly in Arusha, Tanzania, last week and was postponed for a month. But over two days, the court was given a disturbing insight into defence tactics.

Luc de Temmerman's defence strategy is as brazen as the crime itself. Standing before the first genocide trial since Nuremburg, the Belgian lawyer — who represents the vice-president of the notorious Interahamwe Hutu militia — denies there was any slaughter of Rwanda's Tutsis. And if there was a genocide, the real victims were the Hutus.

"It will come out clearly that it is not Hutus who are guilty," Mr De Temmerman said before the trial. "There was no genocide. It was a situation of mass killings in a state of war where everyone was killing their enemies."

Arms and charm are not enough



The US this week

Martin Walker

THIS WAS a strange week for Newt Gingrich, the Republican Speaker of the House, who keeps seeing himself portrayed in the Clinton campaign's television ads as if he, not Robert Dole, were the opponent. After hoping that he had sidestepped the long-running investigation of his campaign finances and taxes by the House ethics committee, it sandbagged him last week with four new charges.

Since the ethics committee contains an equal number of Republicans and Democrats, and their decision to hear the new charges was unanimous, the Speaker is in trouble. The good news for Gingrich is that no evidence, nor the interim report of the independent counsel, will be made public before the election. The bad news is that the new charges are serious, and one suggests that the committee fears that he has been less than truthful in his dealings with them.

This cast a shadow over last week's anniversary celebration, on the steps of the Capitol, of the signing of Gingrich's fabled "Contract with America" two years ago. Then, in Republican mythology, it paved the way for their landslide in the mid-term elections, when they captured both Houses of Congress. Now it looks more like a piece of shoddy advertising, which promised far more than it could ever deliver. The Democrats happily denounce it as the Republicans' suicide note. Republican candidates are running away from Gingrich and Dole in droves.

But Gingrich should never be underestimated, or ignored, when he takes flight on one of his grand, spontaneous speeches, and focuses the mind of a trained historian on the underlying rhythms of politics and diplomacy. Last week he gave just such a speech to the Centre for Security Policy, a think-tank for Reaganites in exile, run by President Reagan's old assistant defence secretary, Frank Gaffney. Gingrich launched the most powerful attack so far on Clinton's handling of the Iraqi crisis, even as opinion polls suggested that 61 per cent of the American public "strongly supports" the president's actions.

"This is an enormous defeat for the United States, a defeat that will reverberate for a generation in the Middle East," Gingrich said. "What is happening in northern Iraq is a Middle Eastern equivalent of the Bay of Pigs [the abortive 1961 invasion of Cuba, a disastrous CIA operation using Cuban exiles]. You can tell who lost; we are flying people out of the country so they won't be killed.

"Everywhere in the world, people will notice this, and America will be weaker, and our credibility the next time somebody meets with us will be weaker, and people will be less likely to work with us," Gingrich went on. "This is bad for freedom, it is bad for America, and it is bad for the people we first enticed to get involved and then failed to defend."

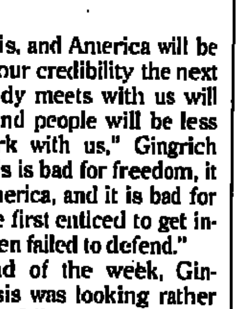
By the end of the week, Gingrich's analysis was looking rather prescient. The fall of Kabul and the open warfare that erupted between Israeli and Palestinian forces last week were doubly connected. They signalled a strategic reverse for US foreign policy across the Islamic world. And they shared the common source of Saddam Hussein's blunt defiance of the Washington assumption that the region could become a stable US protectorate.

With only a few weeks to go before the election on November 5, Clinton's claims to have "boxed in" the Iraqi leader, to have brokered a stable peace between Israel and Palestine, and to have managed the alarming rise of Islamic fundamentalism all lie in tatters.

But the implications of an inflamed Middle East, from Jerusalem to Kabul, go far beyond the US elections. Desperate US efforts to engineer an emergency summit between Yasser Arafat and Binyamin Netanyahu had yet to bear fruit when news reached Washington that fundamentalist Taliban forces had taken the Afghan capital and announced the introduction of Islamic *sharia* law.

In Washington, the chickens were coming home to roost. Most of Clinton's much-trumpeted diplomatic achievements — from the Northern Ireland ceasefire to the restoration of democracy in Haiti — have run into trouble. His hopes of establishing a peaceful and multi-ethnic unified state of Bosnia have been frustrated by elections that locked ethnic distinctions into democratic force. There is still no agreement on what kind of international peacekeeping force will remain in Bosnia next year, nor whether the US will participate.

The elections have been denounced as a fraud by the International Crisis Group. This outspoken verdict is unlikely to strengthen the claim of the report's main author, ex-senator George Mitchell, to succeed Warren Christopher as secretary of state in a second Clinton term. Mitchell's appointment to



chair the Northern Ireland peace talks has fallen foul of this summer's latest disasters, from the march at Drumcree to the police raids on IRA storage sites that led to the shooting of an apparently unarmed man.

Clinton's decision to bank his entire Russian policy on Boris Yeltsin has been thrown into question by the Russian leader's weak heart, even as US determination to enlarge Nato was roundly denounced again last week by the Russian foreign minister, Yevgeny Primakov.

Even Clinton's grander economic strategy of locking the US into the heart of a global economy of free-trading democracies is looking wan following the new US laws that seek to bully Washington's trade partners into observing the unilateral US sanctions against Cuba and Iran. The world is suddenly a much less stable and more alarming place, and Clinton's bid for the mantle of peacemaker in Bosnia, Belfast and the Middle East has worn terribly thin.

And by involving his own presidential prestige as diplomat in these peacemaking efforts, and by committing US troops to them in Bosnia, Haiti and the Gulf, Clinton has raised the stakes — both for himself and for US global influence — extraordinarily high. That increasingly cavalier use of US force may be part of the trouble. The common factor that binds Clinton's global woes together is the reliance on force and on superior military technology to solve immediate crises, rather than to evolve a longer-term strategy.

The ability to deploy US power for short-term goals stands in the way of longer-term thinking. Because the Pentagon can deliver a quick fix, the State Department and national security council needn't supply a lasting policy. This is the abdication of real statesmanship, which requires the calibration of short- and long-term objectives to affordable capabilities.

The long-term US interest is not to guarantee the stability of the Gulf. That is impossible. In the long run, the quasi-feudal sheikhdoms of the Gulf are probably doomed, and to shore them up will command ever more and increasingly controversial US resources. The deeper US interest is not to safeguard their oil, but to liberate America from dependence upon imported oil, which is not nearly as cheap as it looks.

AMERICANS pay around $1.50 a gallon for gasoline, about a third of the price paid by European motorists. To keep oil that cheap, the US has also paid for it in the lives of 450 of its troops over the past five years — lives lost in the Gulf war and in the attack on US barracks in Saudi Arabia. The Gulf war may have been fought at a profit, thanks to passing the hat around to the Saudis, Kuwaitis, Germans and Japanese. But the annual costs of sustaining the Fifth Fleet at Bahrain, the US air wing in Kuwait and Saudi Arabia, and maintaining the pre-positioned equipment for two US armoured brigades in Kuwait and Qatar is at least $30 billion a year. Gulf oil costs America not the $20 a barrel market price, but more like $50.

But why bother with the political risks of higher gasoline taxes to finance more development of alternative energy sources when the US military can hold the Gulf, secure the oil flow and raise a president's popularity by a brisk show of muscle?

Thus in Iraq the use of Cruise missiles and the threat of Stealth warplanes to punish and to intimidate Saddam Hussein, at no risk to American lives, may have helped Clinton in the US opinion polls. But the brusque bombardment has had no impact on Saddam's consolidation of power in Kurdistan, and may have strengthened his grip on power. It has undermined America's alliances in the Gulf, strained its relations with half of Europe, and reduced Turkey's long Nato allegiance into a semi-detached state.

There is a promiscuity to the US resort to hi-tech weaponry rather than strategic thought. Armaments have become crutches, whether missiles or other hardware distributed so freely to the Afghan mojahedin when they were bleeding the Soviet army of occupation. The mojahedin were useful tools then, but have come back to haunt their American backers — in Bosnia where they have become Islam's new mercenaries, in Afghanistan's long-running civil war, and as the potential new cannon-fodder of terrorism. So many of the Stinger missiles are still unaccounted for that the CIA is offering $1 million each in hard cash — no questions asked — to get them back.

The miscued US reaction to the jockeying for influence in Kurdistan between Iraq and Iran in August gave Saddam the chance to inflict what Gingrich calls "an enormous defeat for the US". That may be an exaggeration. But in Washington, from the think-tanks to the off-the-record asides coming from the State Department, there is agreement that Saddam's defiance helped trigger the assertive Islamic mood that has erupted across the region.

The fighting in Jerusalem and on the West Bank jabbed unerringly at the exposed link of America's strategic position in the Middle East, its umbilical link to Israel. Even though the White House is quietly furious at the Netanyahu government and its insistence on opening the tunnel under the al-Aqsa mosque, Washington holds its tongue in public. Meanwhile America's protectorates in the Gulf and its Arab friends are outraged, in a way that adds point to Gingrich's analysis of the way Saddam outfoxed the White House.

Beyond this, there is one core weakness to US foreign policy, and it rests with Clinton himself. His confidence in his own charm and ability to read and to sway other world leaders has beguiled him into a dangerous faith in personal diplomacy. Last week's medical dramas in Moscow have shown the weakness of an approach to Russia that depends so utterly on the Clinton-Yeltsin connection. Clinton's assurance that he had forged a personal connection with British and Irish leaders, and with Gerry Adams, looks empty now.

Clinton pinned most of his Middle East policy on his belief that Shimon Peres would win this year's Israeli elections, and then in his blithe assurance that he could talk round Netanyahu. And now the politics of personality have come full circle in the negative shape of Saddam, who must be confident that he will outlast yet another blundering Christian in the White House, and frustrate any prospect of Pax Americana across the Middle East.

Whatever his faults, Gingrich — who can understand that darker pattern to US diplomacy — is a useful man to have in Washington.

Black leaders shun Farrakhan summit

Jonathan Freedland in Washington

THE black American movement launched at last year's Million Man March seemed close to political oblivion at the weekend as a follow-up convention organised by its leader, Louis Farrakhan, ended in failure.

The meeting, a "national African-American leadership summit", was convened in St Louis to build on the success of the 1995 march. Organisers had boasted that 30,000 black activists would meet for a convention to rival the Democratic and Republican gatherings in Chicago and San Diego.

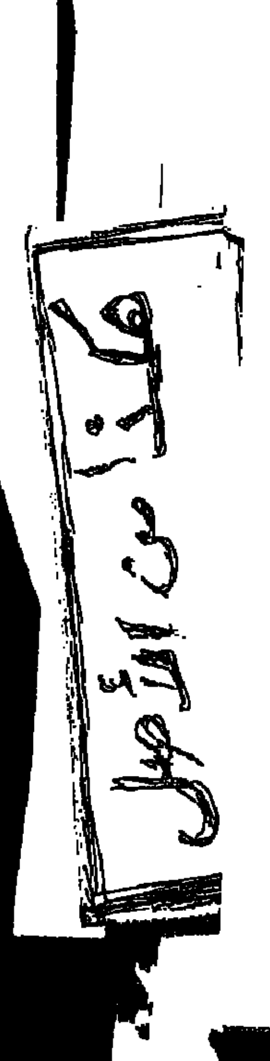
Instead, only a few hundred members of Mr Farrakhan's Nation of Islam sect came to St Louis and the principal black leaders — including the former presidential candidate, Rev Jesse Jackson — stayed away.

"What you see here is the truth slapping you in the face," a delegate, Kobi Little, told the Washington Post. "This is what happens if you don't organise."

Critics said the turnout was the result of Mr Farrakhan's failure to capitalise on last year's march: bills were unpaid and lists of volunteers were left to gather dust. But the movement was also badly derailed by controversy earlier this year after a tour by Mr Farrakhan of Nigeria, Iraq, Libya and Sudan. He came under fire for consorting with dictators.

At the convention, Rev Benjamin Chavis — Mr Farrakhan's key lieutenant — defended the offer of a $1 billion gift from the Libyan leader, Muammar Gadafy, which has sparked a confrontation between the sect and the US government. The former has been barred from receiving the money under US anti-terrorism sanctions imposed on Libya in 1986.

The key cause of the movement's failure, however, is rooted in electoral politics. With polls showing 90 per cent of black voters supporting President Clinton, most African-American leaders see no room for a third force, and have thrown in their lot with the Democratic party.



Women tortured in war on Islamists

Egyptian officials are targeting female relatives in order to break the spirit of male militants, writes **Shyam Bhatia** in Cairo

AMAL FAROUK'S screams keep her three children, mother and neighbours awake every night. If she falls asleep, the nightmare returns and she wakes screaming: "No, please, I beg you, keep your hands off me, don't rape me!"

Amal Farouk, aged 28, is one of many Egyptian women taken hostage and tortured by the authorities to collect evidence against men in their families, suspected Muslim militants.

The government's new strategy of targeting women, officials admit privately, is an unpleasant price to be paid in the all-out war against Islamic terrorists. The deliberate degradation of women by arrest, torture and sexual abuse is intended to break the spirit of male militants seeking to overthrow the government of Hosni Mubarak.

"In our culture, the humiliation of a wife or mother or sister will break a man's back," says Dr Aida Seif al-Dowla, a psychiatrist from the Cairo Centre for the Management and Rehabilitation of Victims of Violence.

Amal Farouk was arrested only hours after police captured her husband, Ahmed al-Sayid, who is now serving a 25-year sentence for an assassination attempt on Egypt's minister of information.

"In the beginning they were nice to me," she said. "They wanted me to appear on television to condemn my husband as a lunatic and wife-beater. When I refused, they turned ugly. First they mocked me for wearing a veil. Then they blindfolded me, stripped me down to my underwear and hung me by my hands from a hook in the ceiling. There were at least seven men in the room and some of them were telling me how much they would enjoy raping me.

"As they taunted me, they whipped me with cable wire, kicked me in the stomach and sliced open my back with razors. This lasted for more than two hours. While I was in this room, I could hear my husband screaming in pain and shouting '*Ya awlad al sharameet ana marafsh aya haga*' [You sons of bitches, I don't know anything]. It was obvious that they were torturing him."

Amal Farouk said that the following day an officer named Mahmoud Hosny had taken her to another room and stripped her naked. "He told me I should divorce my husband and remarry. He said the government would pay me a lot of money if I signed a confession implicating my husband as a terrorist.

"When I refused, he brought in another man and told him, 'This bitch is all yours. Rape her'." When the man began to undress, Amal Farouk shouted, "Okay, okay, I will sign anything you want." Nine days later she was released without charge.

Weeks later, she asked permission to attend her husband's trial in a military court — she wanted to tell the judges that her confession had been extorted under torture. Her request was denied for "security reasons", but the judges later announced that they had accepted her written statement to the police.

Amal Farouk's lawyer, Montasr Zayat, subsequently filed a complaint against her interrogators with the ministry of the interior. The authorities responded by dispatching a police squad to take Amal Farouk back into detention.

"She was held for 10 days, during which she was brutally tortured," said Mr Zayat. "They wanted her to withdraw her complaint and to say that it was all lies. They used electric shocks and one of the interrogators sexually abused her."

On her release she had to be hospitalised for two weeks and received psychiatric care.

"I am 66 and I have never seen such savagery in my life," says Amal Farouk's mother, Um Mohammed, a retired civil servant who divorced her husband when she discovered that he was a police informer. "What they are doing to these women is not only against Islam, it is also against human rights."



Amal Farouk reunited with her children after her ordeal at the hands of police: 'They sliced open my back with razors' PHOTO: SHYAM BHATIA

Mr Zayat said the government strategy will backfire. "These Islamic groups have a special sensitivity when it comes to women. As far as they are concerned, women represent a red line that should not be crossed."

Mr Zayat and his Egyptian lawyer colleagues say the harassment of women has increased in the past two years. Jihan Ibrahim Abdel Hamid, a mother of three, has been in detention since August 1994. She claims that her only "crime" is her husband's alleged involvement in the assassination of Dr Farag Foda, Egypt's most outspoken critic of Islamic terrorists.

Abdel Hamid is accused of helping her husband, Abu Alla Abed Rabbo, but the authorities have never brought her before a judge.

When a civil court ordered her release earlier this year, Abdel Hamid was transferred from the Al-Kanater women's prison to police headquarters in Cairo. There she was served with a new detention order valid for a further six months. The Cairo Centre for Women's Legal Aid has since written to the minister of the interior asking for her immediate release.

Fatima Muawad, the wife of Safwat, one of the leaders of the al-Gama'a al-Islamiya fundamentalist movement, was three months pregnant when she was arrested and taken to the Abdin police station in Cairo. She later miscarried. A medical report provided by her lawyer confirms that she had lost her baby as a result of being kicked repeatedly in the stomach. Like many others, she was never formally charged. Police told her she would remain in prison until her fugitive husband had been arrested.

Earlier this year, police arrested 12 other women for similar reasons in Cairo's Ain Shams district. Witnesses say most were led away in their "immodest" night shifts.

"Some of these women, whose ages range from 21 to 55, were kicked in the stomach and face, and hung upside down at the police station," says Mr Zayat. "We have established that Police General Fadi Habashi personally supervised their interrogation. They were all wives, mothers or sisters of suspected Muslim fundamentalists.

"We have now filed an official complaint against this general, with supporting medical reports and affidavits. The ministry of the interior has promised an investigation, but so far no disciplinary action has been taken."

MINISTRY officials blame fundamentalists for involving their women. "Many of these women have been officially recruited to the so-called *jihad* [holy war]," a senior security officer said. "We have even discovered that some of them actively participated in terrorist attacks, including firing at policemen and planting bombs.

"They are also used for surveillance, intelligence-gathering and carrying messages for their husbands. In some cases, they even dress in the latest Western fashions to avoid arousing suspicion."

Police sources claim that most of the women in detention have been trained to use firearms. When police raided a fundamentalist hide-out in the upper Egyptian city of Asyut, wives joined their husbands in returning fire. The nine-hour battle ended with the death of Ahmed Zaki Sharif, one of Egypt's most wanted terrorists.

Two months ago the wife of another wanted man, Ahmed Abdel Rahim Hasan, opened fire with an automatic rifle from her balcony when police tried to arrest her husband at their Cairo home. Both were shot and killed by the police.

"I am against violence and I have never taken part in any terrorist act," says Amal Farouk. "Don't believe the government when they say women are being recruited by the Islamic movement. What they will not tell you is that women are not accepted as members of Islamic groups. Our role, according to the Holy Book, is to look after our children and our families. Nothing can break us." — *The Observer*

Bringing barbarians to the Bar

Bosnian rapists may get off scot-free. **Clare Dyer** talks to a lawyers' group determined to see justice done

SOME OF the worst sexual atrocities of the Bosnian ethnic cleansing campaign happened in Foca. Bosnian Serbs who took over the city in 1992 systematically gang-raped Muslim women and girls who were herded into rape camps.

Among them was a 15-year-old girl who was subjected to an unimaginable eight-month ordeal of torture, enslavement and continual gang-rapes by countless soldiers. Suicidal for much of the time, she was raped at gunpoint, buggered, suffered heavy vaginal bleeding, held as a sexual slave in a brothel run by Serbian paramilitaries and eventually sold, with another girl, for $300 to two Montenegrin soldiers.

Her story is far from unique in its horror: others among the 20,000 women thought to have been raped in Bosnia suffered just as much. What is unusual is that it has found its way into an indictment drawn up by the International War Crimes Tribunal in the Hague. Most of the women who suffered torture, rape and inhuman treatment at the hands of Bosnian Serb soldiers, policemen and paramilitaries have not had their stories documented. Some are too traumatised or fearful of reprisals to tell their tales; many have never been asked.

An indictment issued last June against Dragan Gagovic, chief of police in Foca, and seven other police or paramilitary leaders says: "The physical and psychological health of many female detainees seriously deteriorated as a result of these sexual assaults. Some of the women endured complete exhaustion, vaginal discharges, bladder problems and irregular menstrual bleedings. The detainees lived in constant fear. Some of the sexually-abused women became suicidal. Others became indifferent as to what would happen to them and suffered from depression ... All the women who were sexually assaulted suffered psychological and emotional harm; some remain traumatised."

The Hague tribunal is the first body ever to recognise and prosecute rape as a war crime and a crime against humanity. The eight men are accused not only of overseeing a concerted campaign of rape and torture but perpetrating many of the acts themselves. Yet all the indications are that they will never be called to account for their crimes. I-For, the Nato-led international military force in Bosnia, has proved unwilling to arrest indicted war criminals.

Rape charges were dropped against Dusko Tadic — one of the few alleged war criminals the tribunal has managed to get its hands on — because the woman witness scheduled to give evidence was afraid to testify. A serious problem for the tribunal is witnesses' fear of reprisals against them or their families. Some are reluctant through shame or fear of rejection to identify themselves as rape victims. Some are too traumatised to face a court, while others just want to get on with their lives.

Madeleine Rees, a Birmingham solicitor, was horrified when she saw TV reports of the Bosnian rape camps. She got in touch with Women's Aid to Former Yugoslavia and asked whether there was anything women lawyers in Britain could do. Women's Aid contacted Medica, a women's organisation based in Zenica in Bosnia, working with women recovering from the war. "They said yes, they could use our help," Ms Rees says.

Ms Rees and a small group of women lawyers founded the Lawyers' International Forum for Women's Human Rights, with pledges of help from 75 lawyers. She and another founder member, Sarah Maguire, a London barrister, have visited former Yugoslavia twice since May at their own expense, meeting representatives of UN High Commissioner for Refugees, women's groups, human rights organisations and lawyers. Their first coup has been to persuade the UNHCR to pledge $25,000 to set up a women's legal resource centre in Zenica.

Ms Rees and her colleagues fear that if no, or few, rape cases reach the tribunal, little evidence of women's sufferings in the conflict will remain on the record. The group's immediate aim is to document the abuses.

Now the group is trying to persuade the Hague tribunal to interpret its rules to make it easier to prosecute rape. It wants guarantees of anonymity for witnesses.

"Bosnia is just the beginning," says Ms Rees. "There's no time limit here. Our aim is to give women access to justice to assert their rights."

The Lawyers' International Forum for Women's Human Rights, 20-21 Tooks Court, London, EC4A 1LB. Non-lawyers are eligible to join

GUARDIAN WEEKLY
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A water bird's homecoming

Mark Cocker

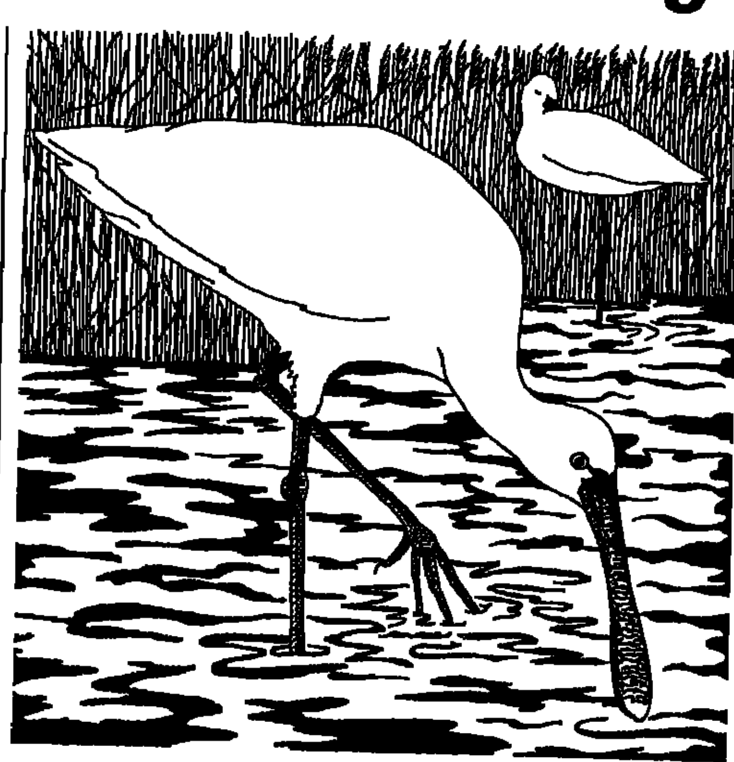


ILLUSTRATION: ANN HOBDAY

ON FIRST impressions spoonbills are not birds to get very excited about. Their vocal talents run to an occasional quiet grunt, while the only feature to relieve the uniformly white plumage is the small yellow chest patch on the adults. The other striking feature, the odd-shaped beak, might compensate for these deficiencies, if only you could actually see it. Unfortunately, spoonbills spend most of the day asleep, with bill and head nestled among their mantle feathers.

Go out, however, around dawn or dusk when they are usually more active or, better still, watch a flock feeding by moonlight and spoonbills are transformed into one of the most fascinating birds of European wetlands. Head down, with that weird, spatulate bill slightly open, the birds scythe back and forth through the water to cut a repeated semi-circle, while raking the bottom ooze with the tip and paddling vigorously to disturb the aquatic life on which they feed.

Occasionally one will spot an escaping fish and suddenly dash away, with its feet splashing down on the water and the angled bill parting the shallows like a miniature paddle. After a successful chase the spoonbill will stop dead then, with a sudden upward jerk, toss the captured prey backwards to swallow it whole.

This year spoonbills have been entertaining British birdwatchers with these extraordinary antics more than at any time in the last century. It follows a dramatic influx of the species from Europe, including a flock of 19, the largest number ever noted in Britain. This unprecedented count, at the RSPB reserve at Minsmere in Suffolk, has raised hopes of an even more tantalising possibility — the first nest for 300 years.

Like so many of Britain's water birds, spoonbills were driven out by wetland reclamation. In fact, habitat loss and deterioration, coupled with pollution, have now caused it to decline across much of Europe, especially in the old Eastern bloc where heavy industry has shown little concern for its environmental impact. Sadly, its this region that traditionally held most of Europe's approximately 9,000 pairs.

The one glimmer of hope for Europe's spoonbills is that in other parts it has experienced a substantial recovery. Nowhere has this been more dramatic than in the Netherlands. An annual increase of 5-8 percent has seen the national total grow from a low of 150 pairs in the 1960s to about 700 pairs today.

It is this expanding Dutch population that explains the recent influx of spoonbills in East Anglia. For the birds that normally nest on reclaimed polders north-east of Amsterdam were deterred this spring by insufficient water levels.

Failing to breed, the spoonbills simply dispersed, some crossing the North Sea to Minsmere, where four birds sported large aluminium rings revealing their Dutch origins.

There is one further element in this summer's spoonbill invasion that is especially satisfying for the Minsmere wardens. Part of the reason for the bird's irregular distribution are its habitat requirements. Spoonbills favour undisturbed lagoons containing high concentrations of aquatic invertebrates. By sheer chance it was exactly this sort of shallow pool that the Minsmere staff had been busy creating.

However, all their wetland excavations had not been done to encourage spoonbills. They were part of a programme to aid the nation's rarest bird, the bittern, down to just 16 pairs earlier this decade. While the work for bitterns has been highly successful, bringing about a sixfold increase in Minsmere's population, it would be the most gratifying reward if work focused on this beleaguered bird also resulted in the return of another long-lamented absentee.

Bridge Zia Mahmood

I CAN'T tell you how many times I've been asked whether I prefer duplicate or rubber bridge. It's a tough question. The other day, playing Chicago — a variant of rubber bridge in which partnerships change after every four hands — I won the biggest rubber I can remember: 40 points (that's 4,000 aggregate points) in just four deals! After that, I was obviously feeling rather partial to this form of the game.

It wasn't that partner or I did anything wonderful or even clever. It was just that we held the sort of cards that come along once in a lifetime. On the first deal I picked up:

♠KQJ98 ♥AK98 ♦Q3 ♣Q4

and opened one spade. Partner bid two hearts, I raised him to four, and he raised himself to seven! His hand was:

♠A3 ♥Q10432 ♦AK852 ♣A

I suppose he might have used Roman Key Card Blackwood or the grand slam force, just to reassure himself about the ace and king of trumps, but not to worry. We made a couple of easy games on the next two hands, but on the fourth it seemed that our streak had ended when I held this below-average collection:

♠Q96 ♥A ♦J10843 ♣J1065

I should have had more faith. "Two clubs!" said my partner, an artificial strong opening. I bid two diamonds as a waiting bid, and partner bid three diamonds. Reaching six was now a formality, since his hand was:

♠A ♥Q104 ♦AKQ75 ♣AK43

A couple of days later I was leafing through an old bridge magazine when I came across this deal, played by the English master Willie Rose back in the 1930s. Rose as South picked up the sort of hand that we'd enjoyed in the Chicago, and he rapidly became declarer in a contract of six spades. Cover the East-West cards and decide how you would play on the lead of the queen of hearts. If you cash a high spade at any point, West will show out.

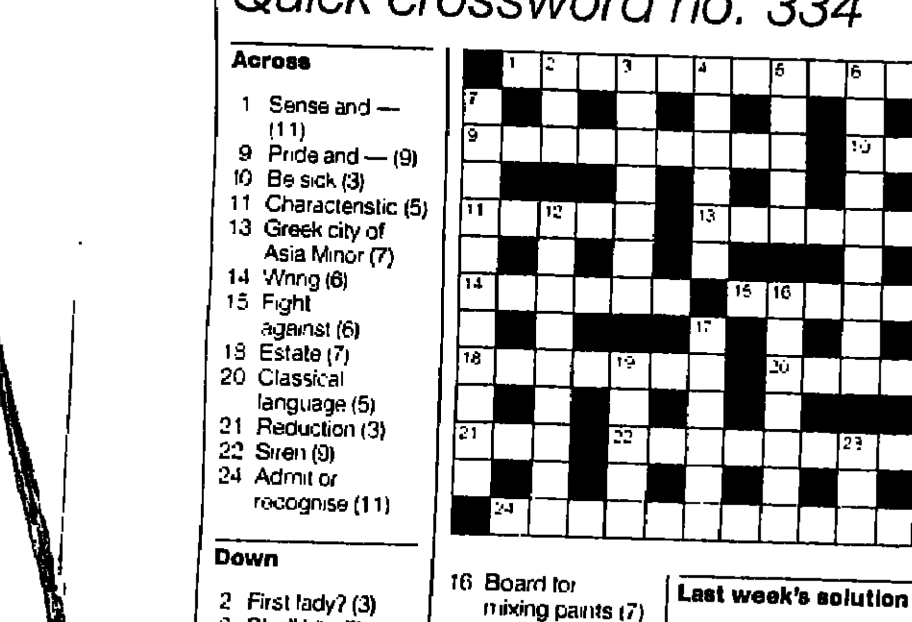
	North ♠62 ♥K53 ♦KQ97 ♣8432	
West ♠None ♥QJ10976 ♦6542 ♣AQ10		East ♠J853 ♥A842 ♦None ♣KJ976
	South ♠AKQ10974 ♥None ♦AJ1083 ♣5	

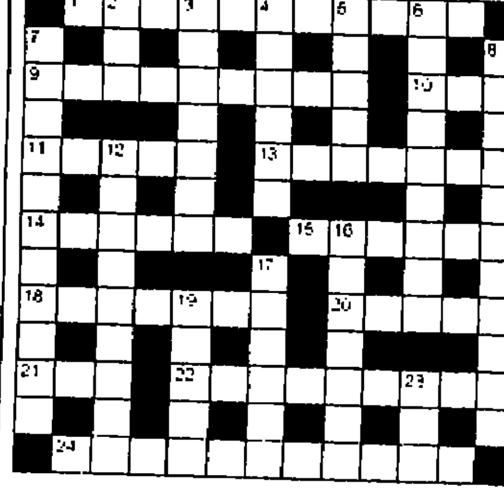
West led the queen of hearts, and Willie Rose ruffed it. He laid down the ace of spades, expecting to claim his contract shortly afterwards, but West's discard was a blow. Most players would now lead a diamond to dummy for a spade finesse. But East would ruff, lead a club to West's ace, and collect a second diamond ruff for two down.

Willie Rose played a club at the third trick! This could never cost, for a losing club was inevitable, and in practice it meant that East could get only one diamond ruff, so the slam was just one down. Now, at rubber bridge Rose would have been cursing, for two suits had to break 4-0 if the slam were to fail. But at duplicate, Rose could leave the table smiling, for his superb play had gained him a top score. All around the room, pairs were failing by two tricks in six spades, many of them doubled.

Perhaps not the most memorable hand of all time, but an example of a great player thinking with character under pressure, and it was fitting that Rose was playing the form of bridge at which his skill was rewarded to the full. When people ask me which I prefer — rubber or duplicate — I say it doesn't matter. Bridge is the greatest game ever invented — in any form. ©

Quick crossword no. 334





Across

1 Sense and — (11)
9 Pride and — (9)
10 Be sick (3)
11 Characteristic (5)
13 Greek city of Asia Minor (7)
14 Wring (6)
15 Fight against (6)
18 Estate (7)
20 Classical language (5)
21 Reduction (3)
22 Siren (9)
24 Admit or recognise (11)

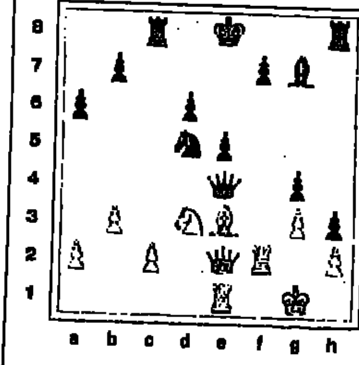
Down

2 First lady? (3)
3 Stroll idly (7)
4 Water heater (6)
5 Bloodsucker (5)
6 Cars, trains, etc: rapture! (9)
7 Suet pudding with currants (7, 4)
8 (Single?) joy (11)
12 Working by itself (9)
16 Board for mixing paints (7)
17 Gull (3-3)
19 Rich lustrous material (5)
23 Food with shell (3)

Last week's solution

Chess Leonard Barden

NOT FOR the first time in Grand Prix rapidplays, the Credit Suisse Masters in Geneva was decided by a simple blunder. The latest victim was no less than Garry Kasparov, whose final match against his old rival Vishy Anand was level at 1½ points each with the Russian apparently cruising to victory two pawns up in the decisive five-minute game.



Black earlier advanced his pawn to h3, setting up mating threats against g2. Now he can win by 1 . . . Nxe3 2 Qxe3 Qxe3+ 3 Rxe3 0-0 followed by f5, when Black's active pieces and pawns will soon prevail.

Instead, Kasparov chose the catastrophic 1 . . . Qxe3?? 2 Qxg4! when White simultaneously threatens Rxe3, Qxc8+ and Qxg7. The world No 1 despairingly gave up his queen by 2 . . . 0-0 3 Rxe3 Nxe3, but after 4 Qxh3 Anand's queen was active and he won on material. Given the rewards in PCA Grand Prix events, this mistake effectively cost Kasparov $10,000.

Earlier, Britain's No 3 Jon Speelman scored one of his best results when he knocked out world No 3 Kramnik before losing to Anand.

Speelman v Kramnik

1 Nf3 d5 2 g3 Bg4 3 Bg2 Nd7 4 d4 c6 5 0-0 Ngf6 6 Nbd2 Be7 7 Re1 0-0 8 e4 c5 9 exd5 Nxd5 10 h3 Bh5 11 dxc5 Nxc5 12 a3 Qc7 13 Qe2 Rfd8 14 Nf1 a5 15 Ne3 Nb6? Lulled by White's nondescript opening, Kramnik drifts.

16 Ng4! Ncd7 17 Bf4 Qc4 18 Qxc4 Nxc4 19 Nfe5! Ndxe5 20 Nxe5 White's bishops are active while Black's, on h5, is misplaced. **Nd6 21 g4 Bg6 22 c4 Rac8 23 Rac1 Bf8 24 b4! axb4 25 axb4 Nxc4** Trying for a tactical escape . . . **26 Nxg6!** . . . which is refuted. Instead 26 Nxc4 Bxb4 gives counterplay.

hxg6 27 Bxb7 Rd4 28 Be3 Nxe3 29 Rxc8 Nc4 30 Ra1 Nb6 31 Rb8 Rxb4 32 Bc6 g5 33 Ra6 Nd5 34 Rd8 Nb6 35 Ra7 g6 36 Rb7 Nc4? Kg7 resists longer, though 37 Be8 wins on material. **37 Rxb4 Resigns.**

No 2441

White mates in four moves at latest, against any defence (by K Kubbel). It looks simple to promote the g5 pawn in three moves, then mate on the fourth — but 1 g6? is stalemate.

No 2440: 1 Kh4 (threat 2 Qh5) Re5 2 Nd6, or Re2 2 Qxf4, or Rxc4 2 Qd5, or Rd4 2 Ne3, or Ng4 2 Qxg4, or Nh3 2 Qxh3.

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Dales cheesemakers scent success

Martin Wainwright

A worker wraps a Wensleydale cheese, which has achieved annual turnover of £6 million since going independent PHOTO: MICHAEL STEELE

THE feisty cheesemakers of Wensleydale are the toast of British conservationists after saving an 800-year-old tradition and reviving the fortunes of a small market town.

As three tonnes of curd swished around in the vats at Hawes in North Yorkshire last week, the firm's own big cheeses received Britain's first National Conservation Award, designed to promote excellence in the most beautiful parts of the country.

The choice of the stubborn but hugely successful dairy to launch the scheme is a boost for specialised industry and a slap in the face for conglomerate firms. Wensleydale was closed in 1992 by Dairy Crest, the commercial arm of the then Milk Marketing Board, but something akin to a revolution took the business world by surprise.

Derision was poured on Dairy Crest from across the world, especially after production of Yorkshire's most famous cheese was moved to a Lancashire creamery and Hawes staff were offered relocation packages in Croydon, south London. The annual cycling Milk Race was cold-shouldered by protesters, and the plight of Hawes, whose population of 1,200 lost 59 jobs, was taken up by all political parties.

"We were astonished by the strength of public support," says Alice Amsden, a creamery director who played a key part in a management buy-out which turned the enterprise's fortunes around. "That, and the realisation that we very nearly went to the wall, played a fundamental part in our success."

The National Conservation Award, which honours the year's outstanding work in Britain's national parks, rewards the creamery's progress since it re-opened after six months in mothballs. The firm's workforce numbers 92 and annual turnover is more than £6 million.

Staff at the plant include head cheesemaker Malcolm Airey, whose father Harry previously held the post, and grandson and great-grandson of Kit Calvert, the Wensleydale farmer who saved the creamery in 1935, when it was threatened by an earlier withdrawal by the Milk Marketing Board.

The firm specialises in handmade cheeses, reversing the Dairy Crest approach of fitting the plant into a national mass production pattern.

The plant includes a museum and gallery, where patient revolving of the cutting blades and careful pipetting of bacteria draw tourists. They then dawdle through a street of souvenir shops, pubs and cafés before meeting their coaches at Outhwaite's ropeworks — Hawes's other visitor attraction.

Notes & Queries Joseph Harker

WAS there ever a law of "sanctuary"? If so, when did it cease to exist?

TEMPLES and shrines in the Roman world offered asylum to fugitives. So that a casual quarrel might not escalate into a blood-feud, a man who had killed or injured another in a brawl could seek the protection of the gods while he made peace with his victim's kin and agreed appropriate reparation. Once Christianity was legalised, churches rapidly assumed this role.

In England, a person in fear of their life could claim ecclesiastical sanctuary in any church, once they surrendered their weapons. They then had 40 days to make their private peace or submit to legal process.

Failing this, they were obliged to "abjure" before a coroner — or swear to leave the country permanently, being guaranteed safe passage to the nearest port. There was a constant tendency for offenders to abuse this protection, and successive medieval laws removed protection from certain offences, including treason, deliberate murder and rape.

In addition, certain locations were granted royal franchises exempting them from the royal courts. Most of these franchised sanctuaries were centred on churches.

In 1540 the franchised sanctuaries were abolished and ecclesiastical sanctuary was heavily circumscribed, abjurers being obliged to go to one of eight designated "cities of refuge". This proved most unpopular, particularly in the designated towns, and their status was removed in 1603. In 1623 all residual ecclesiastical sanctuary rights were abolished. Elsewhere in Europe, the final traces of sanctuary disappeared at the time of the French Revolution. — *Tom Hennell, Withington, Cheshire*

DOES your brain improve by exercising it?

TO HAVE denser nerve connections and more blood vessels, a balancing task is necessary. The mental demands of making the muscles work leads to a "pumped up" brain. Therefore a "fit" brain may help people stay mentally alert as they age. — *Carmen Figueroa, La Serena, Chile*

I *REMEMBER* children in 1930s Liverpool lighting bonfires in the streets early on Good Friday morning and "burning Judas". Did these activities take place anywhere else, and are they still going on?

IN The Lore And Language Of Schoolchildren (OUP, 1959) Iona and Peter Opie describe the custom of burning effigies of Judas as being centred in the largely Roman Catholic area around the docks in Liverpool. They cite a report from 1954 of attempts by the police to prevent fires being lit in the streets: "It is comic to see a policeman with two or more 'Judases' under his arm striding off to the Bridewell and 30 or 40 children crowding after him shrieking 'Judas'."

The origins of the custom are traced to Spain, Portugal and Latin America and it would appear that aspects of it were transported to Liverpool and other ports by visiting ships. The Opies refer to a report in the Times of April 1884 describing crowds in London watching effigies of Judas being flogged on board Portuguese and South American vessels moored at the docks. — *Peter Barnes, Milton Keynes, Buckinghamshire*

IN LAGOS, Nigeria, in the late 1960s, I remember children on Good Friday morning parading an effigy of Judas to chants of "Judasi ole o pa Jesu je" (Judas thief had Jesus killed for money). The effigy was flogged and later discarded or burnt, depending on the exuberance of the group. — *Adé Lawal, Hampton, Middlesex*

IN Northern Ireland in the 1950s, there was a tradition of "burning Lundy" — represented in effigy — on the bonfires lit on the eve of the Twelfth (of July). This Lundy had been going to open the gates of Derry to the armies of James, and was therefore, like Judas, a traitor. — *Hazel Martin, Edinburgh*

THE TRADITION of burning Judas (in Portuguese "queima do Judas") is alive and well in many places in Brazil. The burning takes place on Easter Saturday and is a popular event in the countryside and in some of the older neighbourhoods of the state capitals, but is most often celebrated on farms.

The effigy, which is made of rags and straw and hung on a gallows, can be of the biblical Judas or a more contemporary villain, typically a politician. The high point of the ceremony is reached with the satirical "reading of Judas's will", followed by the burning itself. This may be enlivened by planting fireworks inside the effigy and is the signal for those present to get down to the serious business of the party. — *Simon Johnson and Paulo Perisse, Salvador, Bahia, Brazil*

ON THE south coast of Crete, an effigy of Judas is burnt on Easter Saturday. He is given a black hat and an ugly face. Local children come to throw stones at the traitor, and he then goes up in flames in a fine display of fireworks. After that, the otherwise peaceable Cretans celebrate by firing shotguns, pistols and automatic rifles into the night sky. — *Bernard Stafford, Yorkshire*

IN MONTEVIDEO throughout the month of December the kids set about making Judas's in the same mould as the English Guy and ask passers-by if they have *moneda* (loose change) for the Judas. The Judas is then summarily burnt atop bonfires at midnight on Christmas Eve. These bonfires were originally a tradition of the African slave population. — *Mark and Carolyn Gilmore, Montevideo, Uruguay*

Any answers?

DOES the symbol @ have a name? If not, any suggestions. — *Iain Stevenson, London*

WHY "bunny" rabbits? — *Freda Burn, Abridge, Essex*

WHY do the dark rings under the eyes tend to deepen when you are tired or worried? — *Benjamin Truffert, Amiens, France*

Answers should be e-mailed to weekly@guardian.co.uk, faxed to 0171/44171-242-0985, or posted to The Guardian Weekly, 75 Farringdon Road, London EC1M 3HQ. Readers with access to the Internet can respond to Notes & Queries via http://go2.guardian.co.uk/nq/

Letter from Kastellorizo Harvey Stockwell

Friendly fire

AFTER 50 years with their hands frozen, the clocks on the church of Aghios Georgios in Plataea Australias now work with Swiss precision. Despite fewer tourists in the Dodecanese this summer Kastellorizo has boomed. Thanks to the confrontation in February, Imia — Greece's most remote island possession — has reached the front pages of national and European newspapers; television crews arrive weekly; government-subsidised theatre groups perform in the tiny square below the mosque; 200 national servicemen are billeted at the Church of Aghios Constantinos; and I've returned after an eight-month absence.

The police station now houses a 4-wheel drive vehicle and water police roar along the watery border between Greece and Turkey in their grey rubber ducky. Flights arrive daily from Rhodes; a cruise ship from Cyprus regularly dwarfs the small harbour; and three cardphones have been installed in the town.

Sandwiched between two modern bars blasting "doggie" (disco) and techno music, one-armed Michaeli and his wife Katina preside over their appropriately named Patience taverna as they have done for decades.

But the Patience bar is not all that is left of island tradition. Recently, one of Greece's strangest rituals was enacted. Led by Papa Georgios, friendly marauders stalked the waterfront, from the mosque to the hotel, throwing people into the harbour — fully clothed or in swimming costume, young or old, tourist or resident — as if the Papa is performing un-Orthodox baptisms. A French yacht arrived, its oblivious passengers dressed in white and sipping champagne: passers-by hurled buckets of water at them, and the furious French quickly weighed anchor.

The reason for this eccentric custom goes back to the Turkish occupation. After a period of enforced abandonment residents returned, but too slowly for the monk at the mountain monastery of St George. Clothed in his habit, he threw himself into the water and swam to greet the approaching boats. Papa Georgios leads the tradition today. If you want to stay dry, stay indoors. If not, after the immersions, quite a crowd gathers at a waterfront taverna to drink, douse and dance.

"Happy the Easter," says Savvas. Despite my enfeebled protestations over four years, Savvas greets me this way at any time of the year. One restaurateur swiped another with a knife. The popular Greek singer, Loukianos Kylaidonis, threatened to punch this same restaurateur when he was refused a receipt for the excessively priced meal he and his party had consumed after an open air concert. By late summer, tempers fray and any pretence of communal life is exposed as fraudulent.

NEVERTHELESS despite the rhetoric of politicians and the compulsory rifle training for the local males, excursions continue unabated over the 3km of water between Kastellorizo and Kas in Turkey. We can hear the taped wailings from the minaret calling the Muslim faithful to prayer, just as they can hear our church clocks tolling. Twin fighters roar along Turkey's coastline and a couple of Greek jets scream over the Venetian fort, in a tit-for-tat exercise. But Turkish caiques come to Kastellorizo with daytrippers from across the water, and the Greeks do the same in Kas. In a sense, relations with Turkey are healthier than those within the island.

Kastellorizo is now well known to tourists. For much of the season the island is packed with Kozzies (Australians of Kastellorizian descent) who view their island with frustrated pride and possessive nostalgia. In turn, many Kastellorizians view the Kozzies as slightly mad, blaming the mixture of Greek blood and Australian water.

The new ambulance had its door ripped off when it emerged from the ferry. Only one of the cardphones currently operates and the airport minibus blew its engine out after two weeks' service. Nevertheless it has been impossible to find a seat on the daily flights to the mainland: national elections meant voters had to return to the villages where they were registered, whether it be here or elsewhere. Democracy is seen to be operating. The clocks are on time, but nothing has changed.

With this Ring, I thee transform

Traditionalists accuse Richard Jones of being touched. But, he tells **Andrew Clements,** Wagner demands insanity

WITH its blue, pneumatic Rhinemaidens, its Fricka in a tattered wedding dress stepping out of an old jalopy, and a final conflagration created out of a wall of cardboard boxes, few British opera productions of recent times have aroused so much controversy as the Royal Opera's Ring cycle, directed by Richard Jones and designed by Nigel Lowery, with lighting by Pat Collins. Unveiled over the past two seasons, it consistently polarised critics as much as audiences: some dismissed it as a trivialising, cheapskate assault upon one of the supreme masterpieces of the repertory, while others welcomed it as a breath of fresh air in which Wagner's oppressive grandeur and bombast finally got their comeuppance.

The four operas generated moments of such power and directness that it will be impossible to view many scenes again without remembering the way Jones and Lowery dealt with them. In Götterdämmerung, for instance, the humiliation of Brünnhilde, forced to parade across the banqueting tables of the Gibichung Hall with her head in a paper bag, was as disquieting and appalling a moment as I've ever seen in an opera production.

The Ring has returned to the Royal Opera House in London: Das Rheingold began the first of three complete cycles to be presented over the next month.

When Jones was invited to direct a new Ring at Covent Garden, he and Lowery had already staged the first two operas in the cycle, Rheingold and Die Walküre, for Scottish Opera, though that project had ground to a halt for lack of money. Jones was surprised to receive the approach, and the brief from the Royal Opera House was to begin again from scratch rather than rework what had been done in Glasgow, but there is, he agrees, a theatrical style shared between the two productions.

The point of reference is the Theatre of the Absurd. "We thought this vocabulary was particularly appropriate for The Ring for a number of reasons. One was that it presented a meaningless universe, and a universe in which people can consistently reinvent themselves for the purposes of their plans; another was that the Theatre of the Absurd seems to investigate folly quite rigorously. I've often found myself having to say what The Ring is about, and I always said 'folly'. In the Ring folly leads to nothing but despair, destruction and death."

Over "acres of meetings" the team thrashed out their approach. The treatment that emerged was uncompromisingly bleak and unforgiving. "The work is philosophically and politically very strong. There is a duty in 1996 not to present The Ring in a romantic context, so that it can be honoured as the warning it is. It has to avoid a romantic visual and acting style, but I also want people to find it moving and stirring; I want them to see the characters' behaviour objectively. If they then choose to care about them, that's their problem."

It is a view of The Ring, certainly, that contains few if any sympathetic characters, and one in which almost all the characters, certainly all the gods, are either tainted by Wotan's desperate megalomania or instruments of it. Even Brünnhilde, conventionally the heroine of the cycle, cannot escape censure: "You feel for her because she is the victim of someone else's plan, but she also has an agenda which she wishes to put upon the world and which is as deluded or as much folly as her father's. By the end of Siegfried, her plan for a world built upon love is very strong and it could be construed as ricocheting back on her."

It is fear of death, fear of the abyss, Jones thinks, that drives Wotan. "It's about a desire or a need for permanence. There is a letter from Wagner to the poet Rilke in which he says that lovelessness is fear of death, and that seemed to come up regularly in our initial meetings about this production."



Opera of the Absurd . . . Jane Henschel as a bearded Fricka in Das Rheingold, which kicked off the Ring cycle PHOTOGRAPH: HENRIETTA BUTLER

Over the past century The Ring has provoked more philosophical and political debate about its meaning and possible interpretations than perhaps any other work of art. Jones has immersed himself in that literature over the past decade — "After this is all over, I'm looking forward to putting it all in a big box and hiding it under the stairs" — but he has been careful not to commit himself to any one reading.

There is, inevitably, a political and moral dimension — "I'd like to think that if the audience see someone wandering around on a table with a paper bag over her head, it might enter their heads that it isn't the way to organise yourself socially . . . I don't think there is anything redeeming about The Ring. Brünnhilde's death is a warning, it's an example, but only in the sense that somebody sees that it is better to go than to stay in a life that is so degraded or corrupted.

"I think she thinks it's better to make an exit; if you think that is a redemption, that's okay. My view of her immolation scene is that it is a decision to commit suicide — she is aware that she has failed to create a world built upon love."

The construction of The Ring, Jones believes, precludes easy answers. "The text is very nihilistic, but the music is very affirmative. I think The Ring is profoundly ambiguous."

Maestro in the making

IT IS MORE than 20 years since the Leeds Piano Competition produced a winner who went on to establish himself in the very highest rank of international performers, _writes Andrew Clements_. That was the Russian Dmitri Alexeev, who walked away with the first prize in 1975.

Since then, the winners have tended to be decent rather than outstanding. But this year's winner holds the promise of making the transition from worthy winner to outstanding one.

The success of Ilya Itin, aged 29, a Russian resident in New York, was thoroughly uncontroversial, after a final in which the standard of the six performances was very high.

There is no doubt that Itin was the outstanding performer, with a wonderful range of colour, a truly imaginative way with texture and phrasing, and a supreme technical command. He will make his London debut this month.

The jury — a cosmopolitan lot, though short of a pianist of the highest international stature — takes into account performances in earlier rounds. That presumably coloured their choice for the second prize, for the Italian Roberto Cominati's efficient but unremarkable performance of Rachmaninov's Second Concerto. The Prokofiev Third Concerto from the Yugoslav Aleksandar Madzar was by contrast dashing and dynamic, and oozing with personality.

The performers received vivid support from Simon Rattle and the City of Birmingham Symphony Orchestra. They led off the finals with an electrifying, effervescent account of the Paganini Rhapsody with the Chinese Sa Chen, aged 17.

If some of her ideas were a bit approximate, there was no doubting her talent. Her placing — fourth — was a recognition of potential rather than present stature.

Itin was a class above them all.

Where there's a will there are several ways

TELEVISION
Nancy Banks-Smith

DO SIT up and try not to look so lumpen. "I had . . . possibly still have . . . an image of hatred among the lumpen intelligentsia who read the Guardian," said Peter Lilley.

It's an awful job running the Department of Social Security. You have to sneak in the back door as old age pensioners, Guardian readers to a man, abuse you at the front.

The System (BBC 2), a five-part series on the social services, seems to have had unusual access.

Peter Lilley was rehearsing his conference speech before Jeffrey Archer ("famous author and wordsmith"), who frankly found his performance short on passion.

In this Mr Lilley could have taken lessons from Mr Green. Even Mark Antony could have taken lessons from Mr Green. It didn't occur to Mark Antony to mention his mother.

Most of the faces pressed against the DSS windows were weak and defeated. Not Mr Green's. He said his mother was in hospital and he wanted the price of a ticket to Liverpool. The clerk asked which hospital.

At this Mr Green stepped on the gas: "You're talking about my mother!" (The clerk recoiled at his low blow.) "I ain't got the information youse needs. A lousy £15.50 for me travel fare to get down there! What do I do when I walk out this door now?" he asked passionately. "Go and rob a car to get down to Liverpool? Cos I need to. I've come down to youse to try and help me. That's what you're for, aren't you? You are supposed to be there when people are desperate and in crisis? Well, I'm in crisis! My mother's ill and you won't even give me the fare to get down there! You want stupid evidence first. I ain't got it!" He gestured in the general direction of Liverpool. "What would you do if it was your mother? If you had to get nearly 100 miles to Liverpool?" Saying which, he left in a marked manner, missing the standing ovation. Everyone agreed he had earned the money. The idea of earning it any other way did not seem to have occurred to him.

I don't believe in leaving it to relatives, said the millionaire Armand Hammer. Clearly a man of steel or, to be precise, oil. Inheritance (Cutting Edge Channel 4) was the cautionary tale of Sybil Dreda-Owen, who made darn sure the relatives didn't get it.

Sybil cultivated wealthy, elderly gentlemen. She was usually described as a little, old lady, sometimes a dotty, little, old lady or, for variety, a batty, little, old lady. Until, that is, she surfaced with a will that collared the lot.

Her most entertaining coup was claiming a slice of Dr Bodkin Adams' fortune. Bodkin Adams was extremely good with old ladies, who appreciated his assiduous sympathy. He was accused (and acquitted) of murdering a wealthy patient, who had left him money in her will.

Sybil was the only old lady to turn the tables and get money out of Bodkin Adams. She clawed £53,000 out of his estate, claiming they were engaged. Some may find her claim that the novelist LP Hartley, a homosexual, had fathered her daughter, even wittier.

Walter Joslin was a former civil servant living in what Hampstead calls a cottage. Marie Antoinette would have called it a cottage too. It is an exquisite little period house, white like royal icing, a short stroll from where Keats heard a nightingale sing.

Sybil's gentlemen always died rich. Bodkin Adams, Hartley and Joslin left around half a million each. Joslin willed his estate jointly to his church and his nephew. Then he met Sybil.

A precise, educated and intelligent man, who referred to Sybil and her daughter as The Batty Two, Joslin inexplicably signed shoddily drawn-up wills in their favour, witnessed by shop assistants.

Hampstead is a very rich village. Andrew Scott-Stokes, one of the witnesses, threw a vivid sidelight on village life. "It was always a bit of a bind having to phone people up for her and stuff, but in Hampstead it's not unusual to do this for people. A little dotty old lady who needs help and — I don't know if I should say this — she said she'd see I was all right in the end if I helped her out." Sybil airily promised him Walter's cottage.

He said "You hear stories in Hampstead of people looking after someone else's budgie and becoming multi-millionnaires. You always hope you're going to get that one."

One man had the foresight to bring a woman friend along when Sybil invited him to tea. This evidently threw a spanner in the works. "Henry", the spanner recorded frostily in her diary that night, "took tea. I did not."

If Sybil had been found, you feel she might have been happy to perform. A chattery, colourful, look-at-me, little woman. Scott-Stokes clasped his hands and did a falsetto impression of Sybil, twittering inconsequentially about her father the bishop.

Her father the *what?*

The moral of this, Monica, is, if you have a rich uncle, don't leave it two years before you visit. Turn up with grim regularity and install an efficient widow detector.

GUARDIAN WEEKLY
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Pull back from the brink

HOW CAN Israel dig itself and the Palestinians out of the abyss into which the peace process is now sliding? Stopping the violence only tackles the consequence, not the cause. In what may be becoming a new intifada, no amount of instructions from Yasser Arafat will check every stone-thrower — or restrain Hamas. What is needed is to start, or re-start, something which has ground to a shattering halt — the peace process itself.

Mr Netanyahu's government, as Britain's Foreign Secretary Malcolm Rifkind has said, must spell out the Israeli position and "actually enter into the negotiations in a constructive way". Mr Rifkind adds that he is not yet persuaded that the Israeli government has clarified even in its own mind what its strategic objective might be. In terms of muffled British diplomacy, this is strong stuff. It is a pity that John Major did not say as much, or more, publicly when Mr Netanyahu was passing through London last week. It has been left to President Chirac, once again, to state clearly how most Europeans see the situation, with his telephone call to Mr Arafat and France's unequivocal criticism of the foolish "tunnel" provocation in Jerusalem. Mr Netanyahu has said he is "proud that we did it [completing the tunnel close to the Temple Mount] now". That is of a piece with his superficial and over-assertive approach to these matters of huge and grave importance. Commentators in some of the main Israeli newspapers are in no doubt. They describe Mr Netanyahu as an "endemic refusenik" who has created "a dangerous tide" in relations with the Arab world, and an apprehension of the "next war" among ordinary Israelis at home. Yet he was elected by a bare majority of them.

It is too easy to deal out blame. Mr Netanyahu has reneged on some commitments and procrastinated on many others: worse, he has created an expectation that he will go on doing so indefinitely. Palestinians fear that if they accept the new Israeli proposals on Hebron the Likud government will then proceed to unravel the rest of the Oslo accord. In such a climate it is very hard to handle specific flashpoints. The lack of response to Mr Arafat's significant concession in closing down two Palestinian offices in East Jerusalem does not encourage further gestures of goodwill.

Mr Arafat himself has signally failed to establish in his own emerging Palestinian entity any sense of social confidence and democratic accountability which, at this time of crisis, could offer alternatives to stone-throwing and despair. His proliferating police forces are dangerously undisciplined, though it seems clear that in many instances last week they used their weapons only after seeing Palestinians killed or wounded by Israeli fire. Increasing numbers of Palestinians reproach Mr Arafat for having gone along with the peace process, even if it remains hard to see what alternative he had.

It may still not be too late for Mr Netanyahu to demonstrate, as a commentator in Ha'aretz puts it, that he is gaining experience very fast. The tunnel could be closed indefinitely; plans for new settlement housing could be postponed; outstanding commitments, such as free passage between Gaza and the West Bank, could be delivered tomorrow. Washington should take more seriously Mr Netanyahu's recent threat to put his "holy" claim to Jerusalem ahead of good relations with the US. Bill Clinton needs to pile on the pressure: what Israel needs is cool rethinking and constructive action.

Taliban triumphant

AFGHANISTAN has been a war too many for the Western world since it was "won" when the Soviet army withdrew. It then slid quietly into a series of grim civil conflicts; the latest has now resulted in the occupation of Kabul by the crusading — and fundamentalist — Taliban militia. Even last week's news would have attracted less attention outside Afghanistan if the victorious Taliban had not executed the former President Najibullah and his brother, and hung up their beaten bodies for public display. On the streets of Kabul, the mood appeared to be more one of relief as refugees returned home. This is a devastated city where half the population lacks adequate food and shelter, 100,000 are wholly dependent on UN aid, and death from incoming fire is a daily threat. It may seem better, for the moment anyway, to be ruled by the Taliban from within rather than shelled by them from outside.

The Afghan tragedy has been compounded at regular intervals by the refusal of a losing side to accept that it has lost, or of a winning coalition to agree on how to share power. It is not yet clear whether the ousted government of President Rabbani and Gulbuddin Hekmatyar will settle for defeat. Even if it does, their forces will have to be accommodated somehow. The Taliban, disciplined by its zealotry, may turn out to be less faction-ridden and more durable. The speed with which Pakistan is moving towards recognition will improve their chances — as well as confirming the suspicion that Islamabad has been backing the Taliban all along. The UN protest at the execution of Najibullah is unlikely to carry much weight. The UN's peace-making efforts have always been throttled back to a low level reflecting the faint interest shown by the Security Council. It will be relieved to give up the effort and concentrate instead on humanitarian relief, which the Taliban have said they wish to continue receiving.

But before hands are washed too easily, we should pause for two thoughts. First, the victory of the Taliban means the submission of half the population — women — to more extreme forms of fundamentalist oppression. Taliban rule elsewhere has already been characterised by savage forms of punishment and severe restriction of women's rights. Second, the Taliban represents the logical consequence of a callous and careless policy of backing the anti-Soviet mojahedin to the hilt. The enemies of our (communist) enemies were rewarded with cash, drugs and arms. Some of this has come back to haunt the West in the shape of "Afghani" terrorism. Most has remained in Afghanistan to shatter the lives of its suffering people.

Where prison isn't working

EVEN con-artists are eventually caught. Even more satisfying is the thought that he has known he was going to be caught for five months. He has had plenty of time to prepare for last week's humiliation. Five months ago the Guardian reported that Michael Howard's honeymoon was over: crime was going up. The official minutes of a top level Home Office meeting where the alarm bell was rung were leaked in April. Now it's official. To use the simplistic language so beloved by the Home Secretary: crime is up — prison isn't working.

Just a year ago the Home Secretary said "a real turning point in the fight against crime" had been reached. Last year, announcing a third consecutive year in which crime had fallen, an ebullient Mr Howard reminded sceptical reporters that this was "only the third time this century" this had happened. Moreover the 8 per cent fall over three years was "the largest continuous fall in recorded crime". It was as though heaven was on his side as he battled with the then Lord Chief Justice, who was still insisting that detection, not detention, deterred crime. A wise Home Secretary would have been more cautious. A more truthful one would have acknowledged that, although crime was down in the previous three years, in the three-year period before that it had risen by 42 per cent — a rise that was not only the biggest since records began last century but would have taken years to wipe away by the reductions Mr Howard was trumpeting.

All crime statistics need to be treated with caution. The true figure is not 5 million for *recorded* crime but 19 million, as the latest British Crime Survey, also published last week, confirms. It is tempting to gloat but it would be wrong. Too many people in the system have been hurt: probation officers, prison officers, police and prisoners. It was Mr Howard who tore up the work of his five Tory predecessors. He ditched the 1991 Act, billed at the time as the third biggest change in the criminal justice system this century — along with the introduction of probation in 1907 and abolition of flogging in 1948. Under the 1991 Act prison was still to have its place but there was to be more emphasis on prevention and community punishment. All this was replaced by Mr Howard's one-club approach: prison works. Now the criminal justice system is in its deepest crisis for years. Only 4 per cent of people surveyed by the Home Office believed crime was falling and some 75 per cent rightly perceived it to be rising. For all the Home Secretary's headline chasing, Joe Public remains unimpressed.

Palestinians vent fury of the dispossessed

Edward Said

THERE have been two battles taking place between Palestinians and Israelis. One is over Jerusalem and was most immediately provoked by Mayor Ehud Olmert's decision to re-open a tunnel beneath what Muslims call al-Haram al-Sharif — the noble sanctuary — where the Mosque of Omar and the al-Aqsa Mosque have stood for almost 1,500 years. As both sides quite rightly see it, the issue is dominance over Jerusalem.

Both Olmert and the Israeli prime minister, Binyamin Netanyahu, know perfectly well that the Israeli annexation of East Jerusalem after the 1967 war has been consolidated by an enormous ring of settlements around the city, built on confiscated Palestinian land. And Israel has steadily imported a large number of mostly Orthodox Jews into the predominantly Arab old city in an unceasing attempt — abetted by house occupations, expropriation of land, deceptive property purchases from Arabs, and outright eviction of Palestinians — to "Judaise" what was formerly Palestinian about East Jerusalem.

Against all this there has been an inadequate, even pathetic, Palestinian and Arab and Muslim response. It would take either a cataclysmic natural disaster or an unimaginably large military campaign to dislodge the Israelis now. Since neither has been in the offing, the sudden, middle-of-the-night re-opening of the tunnel is an act of arrogant triumphalism, a rubbing of Palestinian and Muslim noses in the dirt.

The second battle arises directly out of the Oslo peace process. Those of us who criticised it from the start were a tiny minority of Arabs and Jews who grasped its ungenerous, humiliating implications for the Palestinian people. This view has since acquired great support. Sponsored by the US, the peace process was built callously upon the sufferings of a people whose society had been destroyed in 1948 by an incoming Jewish population claiming biblical rights in Palestine. Two-thirds of the land's inhabitants were driven from their homes. In 1967 Israel occupied the rest of historic Palestine. Yet Oslo neither ended Palestinian dispossession nor alleviated the short-term miseries of an Israeli military occupation.

It is true that Yasser Arafat, discredited and isolated after his ruinous Gulf crisis policy, was allowed in 1994 to set up a truncated autonomy regime that was still controlled by the Israelis. But despite the rhetoric and some of the ceremonies and symbols of peace, Israeli West Bank settlements grew during the Rabin/Peres period. Meanwhile Arafat built a Palestinian Authority that was corrupt, dictatorial and, so far as improving conditions was concerned, a dismal failure.

The autonomy arrangements that Palestinians (excluding the 4 million refugees whose destiny was postponed to some nebulous "final status" situation) have to live with today are a bizarre amalgam of three historically discarded "solutions" devised by white colonialists to solve the problem of native peoples. One was that natives could be turned into irrelevant exotics, with their lands taken from them and living conditions settled on them that reduced them to day labourers and pre-modern farmers. This is the American-Indian model.

Second was the division of lands (reservations) into non-continuous bantustans in which an apartheid policy gave special privileges to white (today's Israeli) settlers, while letting the natives live in their own run-down ghettoes; there they would be responsible for their municipal affairs yet subject to white (again Israeli) security control. This is the South African model.

Finally the need to give these measures local acceptability required a native "chief" to sign on the dotted line. The whites gave him some support, a title and a privilege or two, even a native police force. This was the French and British model for Africa. Arafat is the late 20th century equivalent of the African "chief".

The problem is that the Palestinians were hardly likely to be content with ramshackle anachronisms of this sort. Arafat kept promising things (like East Jerusalem) which he simply could not deliver, but was too jealous of his own power to allow anyone else any authority or breathing space. Most of the reward he, as well as the Israelis and Americans, kept speaking about never materialised. Gaza has 70 per cent unemployment. Investments have not poured in. The clampdown on expression and democratic practices is as severe as under direct Israeli rule.

AND STILL the Israelis clamour for security from Palestinian terrorists while they confiscate more land, build more houses and bully more people such as the inhabitants of Hebron whose current plight is a capsule version of the whole mess. Guarded by the Israeli army, a group of 400 settlers squat in the middle of this Arab town whose 200,000 inhabitants have been punished by curfews, the closure of the central market and a whole system of barricades. Why? Because in February 1994 Baruch Goldstein entered the Hebron mosque and massacred 29 Muslim worshippers in cold blood.

What has been happening in Jerusalem, Gaza and the West Bank is therefore an explosion that could easily have been (and in some cases was) foreseen. It is an intifada against the Oslo Accord, and against its planners and participants, Israeli as well as Palestinian.

The horror of so much Palestinian blood wantonly spilled is scarcely mitigated by a premonition of future eruptions. Israel is trying to pre-empt, perhaps even circumvent, the final status negotiations.

Arafat and his shaken Palestinian Authority may have begun to perceive that the final status is likely to be as dismal as the present one, thus egging on unarmed civilians to take on the Israeli army. But such justified discontent cannot so easily be turned off and on.

The present crisis is a glimmering of the end of the two-state solution. Israelis and Palestinians are too entwined in history, experience and actuality to separate, even though each proclaims the need for separate statehood. The challenge is to find a way to co-exist, not as warring Jews, Muslims, and Christians, but as equal citizens in the same land. — *The Observer*



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Le Monde

Bolivian workers try to hold their ground

Nicole Bonnet in La Paz

RESPONDING to a call from the Confederation of Bolivian Workers (COB), a trade union opposed to the government's economic policy, thousands of demonstrators marched through the streets of the capital, La Paz, on September 18 to protest against the privatisation of the oil industry and plans to reform the pension system. There had not been such a large turnout in Bolivia for 10 years.

But demonstrators also wanted to express their solidarity with farmers, who are under threat from government plans to redistribute land. At the end of August thousands of farmers began marching on the presidential palace, which they are due to reach in the next few days.

Over the past year, farmers' leaders have examined and accepted the contents of three different government bills aimed at setting up a National Institute of Agrarian Reform. But no sooner had they accepted the final version than it was altered by the government, which, they suspect, is trying to confiscate communal and coca-growing land in order to sell it to individual farmers. "We're fed up with phoney negotiations," says Isabel Ortega, spokeswoman of the Farmers' Federation. "We've given a lot of ground, and we're now determined not to concede any more."

That would also seem to be the mood of the new COB executive, which was elected at the beginning of September during the union's congress. After urging members to take part in a popular uprising, its new leader, Edgar Ramirez, a tough miner nicknamed "the Hurricane", warned: "From now on, workers will forgo passive resistance in favour of subversive resistance, striking blows at the neo-liberal regime in order to weaken it and eventually bring it down."

Ramirez's predecessor as leader of the COB, Oscar Salas, was more flexible in his dealings with the authorities. It is now a very different ballgame. "For four years dialogue got us nowhere," says veteran union leader Simon Reyes. "The government did not keep any of its promises as regards pay rises or farmers' claims."

This new combative stance does not mean that Bolivia is about to see a return to the golden age of the COB, which played a key role in political and social life for 40 years. The ultraliberal reforms carried out in August 1985, followed by the tin crisis and mass lay-offs in the mining sector, had the effect of ruling out the kind of general strikes the COB had made its speciality. The implementation of tough repressive measures completed the job.

Today, the tin mines' workforce of 27,000 has shrunk to 1,200. Most factory workers have little job security and do not intend to risk getting the sack by stepping out of line. The COB's new blood is made up of teachers and farmers, most of whom are *cocaleros* (coca growers) who earlier worked in the mines. Hence the COB's interest in the farmers' uprising.

Roman Loayza, a farmers' union leader, does not mince his words: "Legislation on the ownership of land, water and forests will result in our territory being sold off cheaply. It won't get passed. And the war on coca growing will fail too."

On a wall at his union's headquarters a diagram shows what is at stake in the conflict: on one side there is the ancestral way of doing things — communal life, traditional Andean technology, and harmony with the natural world, all aimed at achieving better living conditions and saving the planet; and on the other the "paradise" promised by President Gonzalo Sanchez de Lozada — enslavement to market forces and unlimited decision-making power put in the hands of the new bosses.

Before he became president in 1993, Sanchez de Lozada had been finance minister. In that role he had been largely responsible for introducing Bolivia's neo-liberal economic model. The president is now moving as fast as he can to push his reform package through before the election campaign gets under way next June.



Making a point . . . A peasant farmer points a stick as if it were a rifle after several thousand farmers protesting against new agrarian laws clashed with riot police in La Paz PHOTOGRAPH: REUTERS

If he can keep to his privatisation timetable, not a single state-owned company will exist by the end of the year. It is an ambitious programme: the privatisation of the state oil company YPFB has already been postponed six times, and that of the Vinto foundry has caused an outcry in one region of the country. As for the planned privatisation of the pension system, it has come in for flak even from members of parties within the ruling coalition.

Eleven years of "new economic policy" have enabled Bolivia to maintain its economic stability. But the social cost has been very high — 70 per cent of the population live in extreme poverty.

The president admitted as much in his message to the nation on August 6: "Our country can no longer go on living with the stigma of being the South American nation with the highest rates of infant mortality, malnutrition, illiteracy, rural poverty and discrimination." The COB would not disagree with a word of that — but the union advocates solutions that are diametrically opposed to those proposed by the government.

(September 22/23)

Greece's poll reassures its EU partners

EDITORIAL

GREECE seems at last to have joined the European fold. Costas Simitis's victory at the September 22 general election marks the arrival of a new generation of politicians in Greek public affairs. It looks very much as if the civil war and its bloody aftermath are now regarded as truly dead and buried by the Greek people, who are fed up with the fratricidal squabbling of mob orators and are keen to enter the 20th century.

That Greece, cradle of demagoguery as well as of eloquence, should have given a parliamentary majority to a dull politician who asked voters to use their heads rather than follow their gut reactions is reassuring to its European partners.

Faced with a conservative opponent who was continually upping the nationalist ante, Simitis managed to foil attempts at provocation, notably as regards relations with Turkey. As a result, he qualified as a credible player on the international stage and brought the curtain down on the years of populist excesses that were the hallmark of Andreas Papandreou, his predecessor at the head of the Pan-Hellenic Socialist Movement (Pasok).

The defeat of Antonis Samaras's nationalist party, Political Spring, and above all the failure of the extremist strategy pursued by Miltiades Evert, leader of the main rightwing opposition party, New Democracy, suggest a new era has begun.

Behind the intemperate behaviour that is inevitable in any election campaign, it was possible to detect a firm conviction on the part of most of the main parties that Greece now needs to be firmly anchored to the European Union.

It is up to Europe to respond to the signals put out by Athens. It must, above all, recognise the specific characteristics of a country that, although the fountainhead of our shared culture, is one of the most fragile nations in the EU. This is particularly important because Greece has to face a difficult economic challenge as it pursues an ever tougher anti-inflation policy that will require great sacrifices.

That need for austerity and Simitis's insistence throughout the election campaign that Greece should meet the Maastricht criteria sparked much acrimonious debate before the poll. The Socialists' victory at a time when the country has already been hard hit by unemployment is unlikely to take the heat out of that debate.

But the EU, now that it has embraced some Nordic countries and is considering offering membership to the nations of central Europe, would do well to keep in mind the fact that one of Europe's flanks borders the Balkans.

(September 24)

Thais lose out in political merry-go-round

Jean-Claude Pomonti in Bangkok

FOR 10 years Thailand achieved remarkable levels of growth. But the failure of its last period of military rule (1991-92) showed that the urban middle classes, who were becoming increasingly influential, wanted the country's still fragile democracy to be strengthened.

With the return of civilian government, it seemed that Thailand, a kingdom of 60 million inhabitants standing at the crossroads of continental southeast Asia, was settling down again to a period of steady growth.

But those blue skies have now clouded over. The growth rate, which was still running at 8.5 per cent in 1995, will fall below 7 per cent this year. Like other emerging economies in Asia, Thailand is having to cope with a sharp drop in export growth: the increase in the first half of 1996 was 6 per cent, compared with 23.6 per cent during the same period last year.

Meanwhile the current balance of payments deficit has topped the reputedly dangerous level of 8 per cent of gross domestic product. The stock exchange has reacted to a crisis of confidence by losing 30 per cent after briefly rallying at the beginning of the year.

On the political front, the parliamentary regime that grew out of the 1992 crisis has not functioned properly. The rapid loss of popularity by the initial four-party ruling coalition led to early elections within three years. The current ruling coalition, which came to power in the July 1995 elections and originally consisted of seven parties, is now on the point of dissolution after less than 18 months in office.

In order to avoid a motion of no confidence, the prime minister, Banharn Silpa-archa, promised on September 21 that he would tender his resignation within seven days. This opened up two possibilities: either a thorough reshuffle of the cabinet, to which he would no longer belong, or a very early dissolution of parliament.

Thailand's electoral system is characterised by the presence of pressure groups, each with its own clan leader, a tradition of vote-buying, a regrettable lack of policy platforms, and a one-round uninominal voting system.

The result of this system is that people vote for a multitude of parties which are, in fact, little more than special interest groups and *ad hoc* alliances.

This flawed system is only made worse by a quota system in the allocation of ministries: once a government post has been allocated to a party, it is the party, not the premier, who appoints the minister. The process of government tends to grind to a halt because the prime minister spends most of his time trying to solve power-sharing problems rather than running the country.

In the past, army officers would sometimes take over even before a government had been given time to prove itself. But after getting their fingers burnt in May 1992, when the king stepped in to halt a ruthless crackdown in Bangkok, they have kept a low profile — and a coup now seems unlikely.

Bad management has dented Thailand's image. The economy could recover some of its dynamism if, as the business community urges, technocratic ministers were put in charge of the economy, finance and telecommunications.

Whatever happens after Silpa-archa's resignation, the odds are that, unless the electoral law is changed, the same faces will be returned to office after an extremely expensive two-month campaign — the 1995 election cost more than $600 million — during which it will be impossible to take any steps to put Thailand's economy back on an even keel.

(September 25)

Unblinking eye of a German master

Philippe Dagen visits an exhibition in France that reveals Otto Dix's debt to the past

ALTHOUGH Otto Dix (1891-1969) is indisputably one of the two or three great German painters of the 20th century, he is very poorly represented in French national collections and has been largely ignored by exhibition organisers.

A Dix retrospective was held in 1971 at the Musée National d'Art Moderne in Paris. But neither the 1975 Brussels show nor the excellent Tate Gallery exhibition of 1992 came to Paris.

German painting in general tends to get a cool reception from the French: Max Beckmann, the other German giant of the 20th century, is still awaiting his first Paris retrospective — now at last scheduled for 1998, 40 years after his death.

Against that background, Sylvie Lecoq-Ramond's decision to put on a Dix show at the Musée d'Unterlinden, in the eastern French town of Colmar, is all the more praiseworthy and welcome.

The exhibition, which comprises drawings and paintings by Dix never shown before, centres on a specific theme and is guided by Lecoq-Ramond's desire to help visitors who are probably not very well acquainted with Dix's *oeuvre* to understand why it is so important.

As the Musée d'Unterlinden's main claim to fame is Matthias Grünewald's celebrated Isenheim altarpiece, and Dix is known to have greatly admired Grünewald, the theme of the exhibition is, appropriately, "Otto Dix and the Old Masters".

Lecoq-Ramond looks at one particular aspect of Dix: the man who asked questions about his art, his aims, his methods and the references he drew on.

It would be almost impossible nowadays to organise a comprehensive show of Dix's works: his paintings, many of which were done on wood, are only very rarely lent, and insurance costs have risen at the same rate as the painter's soaring reputation. Only in France has that reputation remained modest.

The story of Dix's relationship with the old masters can be said to have started in about 1923, when he was 32. He had been convinced very early on of his vocation as a painter. After studying art in Dresden, the home of Ernst Ludwig Kirchner and the Die Brücke school, he went through Impressionist, Cubist-Futurist and Dadaist phases. In 1920 he took part in the first Dada fair and became friends with George Grosz. He was thoroughly familiar with the work of his French and Italian contemporaries.

But another very different experience had left its mark on him: he had spent three years as a soldier on the front line in Flanders, Russia and Champagne. Despite the ordeal of shellings and massacres, he somehow always found time to draw. His subjects were trenches, shelters, explosions and, sometimes, corpses.

He had seen the ugly side of history in all its horror. He had lost all his illusions about human nature, passion, vice and virtue. His darkest ideas were only confirmed by the post-war Germany he observed, a country of cripples and revellers, ex-servicemen and women of easy virtue.

He felt the urge to paint them. But to do that he needed to find a mode of representation that would bring out the full force of the barbarity and duplicity he could detect everywhere.

Dix was weary with Expressionism and its rhetoric of vehemence. He was first attracted by Cubism-Futurism, but later found it too elliptical. He retained only one principle from his brief dalliance with Dadaism, but it was the most important one: a work of art had to scream.

No paintings scream more loudly than those of the greatest German artists, such as Grünewald, Lucas Cranach, Hans Baldung and Albrecht Dürer, all of whom combined the most meticulous realism with the most searing violence. They painted the horror of reality in its most irrefutable and intolerable aspects. As Dix strove to paint a contemporary form of horror, he could not do better than take a leaf out of their book. This he did admirably.



Dark reflections . . . Otto Dix's Memories of the Mirrored Rooms in Brussels (1920)

From the beginning of the twenties he practised drawing in a naturalistic style, using the etcher's needle, red chalk or charcoal. He began to establish a methodical inventory of the world. His subjects ranged from nudes, new-born babies and portraits of old men to drapes, wild flowers, forest trees and dogs.

His unblinking eye is irresistibly reminiscent of Dürer's in the way it scrutinises the visible world. His smoothly painted, impeccably realistic oils on wood also recall the uncompromising, unidealistic art of Cranach and Hans Holbein. There are countless parallels in both composition and use of colour, and similar methods produce a similar result — a deceptively neutral description which is in fact deeply cynical.

Each section of the exhibition deals with a different theme and its earlier sources. This form of presentation perhaps overemphasises the encyclopaedic nature of Dix's *oeuvre* at the expense of his very distinctive irony and inventiveness. It sometimes detects quotation where there is perhaps mere coincidence. It tries a little too hard to prove its point.

But the exhibition does point up the fearsome acuity of Dix's self-portraits, where the effects of time and the approach of old age can clearly be detected, and the indecent power of his nudes — mostly fat women kneeling or crouching.

There is a series of water-colours and oils which show the painter's son, Ursus, as he is being born — a staggering exercise in medical painting — as well as landscapes where references to old masters edge dangerously close to mannerism.

There remains the question of war. It was a decisive event in Dix's life, and his 50 etchings of it contain some utterly chilling images. Between 1923 and 1936 he also made the battlefield the subject of several paintings.

The first of these, called The Trench, caused an immediate outcry and was probably destroyed by the Nazis in 1939. The second such painting, Dix's great masterpiece, is his triptych The War, which pays an admirable tribute to Grünewald. It was too valuable and too large to travel from Dresden to Colmar. Its absence can be cruelly felt: the comparison of the two works would surely have marked the climax of the exhibition.

Instead, the show ends with paintings where Dix exposes the evil of another world war and another horror, the concentration camps. They are proof, if proof were needed, of the greatness and consistency of Dix, the painter who refused to turn a blind eye.

Otto Dix et les Maîtres Anciens (Otto Dix and the Old Masters), Musée d'Unterlinden, Colmar. Closed Tuesday. Until December 1.

(September 20)

Colonial stirrings

Emmanuel de Roux

FOR many years after the first world war, the not very grammatical slogan "Y'a bon Banania" accompanied the image of a beaming Senegalese infantryman in ads and posters for a chocolate drink.

In the early twenties, the Germans struck a medal to protest against the occupation of the Rhine's left bank by French troops: the front showed a thick-lipped negro in profile, wearing a French army helmet, and the reverse a German woman lashed to a gigantic black phallus, also topped by a helmet.

The legend of France's colonial troops is encapsulated in those two images, one showing the noble savage who comes to the aid of his mother country, and the other the barbaric mercenary, unscrupulously used as cannon fodder.

The exhibition at the Château de Péronne, in the Somme, retraces the story of the "natives" who were recruited, sometimes by force, to serve as back-up troops for the French army during the first world war. The real and imagined experiences of those men, who were recruited in the Maghreb, sub-Saharan Africa, the West Indies, Indochina and the Pacific islands, are evoked in the exhibition by a wealth of paintings, posters, photographs, newspapers, books, uniforms and other items.

In all, 608,000 colonial troops were mobilised, and 81,000 died. Proportionately they lost fewer men (about 12 per cent) than metropolitan regiments (almost 16 per cent). These figures give the lie to one great myth — that colonial troops were sacrificed during major offensives.

Another myth collapses too, that of "black strength". The soldiers that had been recruited in distant parts of the world turned out to have little fighting spirit, particularly at the beginning of hostilities. Homesick, disorientated, demoralised, and poorly educated, they were soon restricted to auxiliary duties.

The war had major consequences for France's overseas territories. Although the French empire seemed to emerge reinvigorated from war, it was deeply affected by its aftermath. The fraternising that went on in the trenches was soon forgotten, and feelings of alienation only amplified the humiliation that had already been caused by discrimination.

The first colonial independence movements sprang up in the wake of the return home of such ex-servicemen as the Algerian nationalist, Messali Hadj, the future Tunisian president, Habib Bourguiba, and the father of Vietnamese independence, Ho Chi Minh. It was not long before the heavily bemedalled war veterans who were pampered by the colonial administration came to be seen as collaborators.

Mémoire d'Outre-Mer — Les Colonies et la Première Guerre Mondiale (Overseas Memories — The Colonies and the First World War), Château de Péronne, Somme. Closed Monday. Until October 20.

(September 20)

Le Monde

Directeur: Jean-Marie Colombani

Netanyahu Walks Fraying Political Line

Barton Gellman in Jerusalem

THE STREET combat between Israelis and Palestinians last week, in some ways the worst in the nearly 29 years since Israel conquered the West Bank and Gaza Strip, left an equally grave political crisis unresolved. And the man who had the most to decide, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, appeared profoundly unsure what to do.

Far more swiftly than anyone predicted, just as he passed the 100-day mark in power, Netanyahu has been confronted with the basic choice he straddled in his successful bid for office: to nurture Israel's partnership with the Palestinians, or see it die.

Netanyahu won the premiership in May by promising to "make a secure peace" without the compromises to Palestinian nationhood that his Labor Party predecessors reluctantly planned. He was prepared to shake Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat's hand, but not to inhibit his own drive for Jewish control of Arab-populated East Jerusalem and the four-fifths of the West Bank not yet subject to Palestinian self-rule. He allowed his top ministers to meet Arafat but ignored treaty deadlines obliging Israel to make concrete transfers of land and power.



Palestinians watch as one of their policemen takes aim at Israeli soldiers defending the Jewish settlement of Netzarim, near Gaza City, during clashes last week PHOTOGRAPH: ADEL HANA

Last week's bloodshed — which ebbed at the weekend, with only scattered incidents and no reported deaths — seems to demand a choice between the two rival story lines about Israelis and Palestinians that have divided Israeli politics since the 1967 Middle East war.

One — which Netanyahu grew up with — holds that there is no genuine peace partner among the Palestinians, no safe boundary for Israel short of the Jordan River and no answer to Arab uprising but an iron fist. The other is based on the exchange of land for peace and the possibility of separating two unhappily intertwined peoples into neighboring states.

Each story line offers an explanation for the violence that left 70 people dead in street fighting from southern Gaza to the northern West Bank, and each has a prescription for ending it. The choice has paralyzed Netanyahu, who appears unprepared to discard his old core beliefs but unwilling to embrace the course of action they suggest.

Government sources say former generals Ariel Sharon and Rafael Eitan demanded in a cabinet meeting that Netanyahu dispatch tanks and Israel's full armed might to crush the uniformed Palestinian security forces who used assault rifles to back rock-throwing demonstrators. Now that the fighting is over, they and other Likud party hard-liners such as Uzi Landau and Binyamin Begin insist the Palestinian violence should have no reward — even if that means the collapse of the three-year effort to reach a negotiated peace.

"Look, there is a basic problem here," Netanyahu's director of policy planning and communication, David Bar Illan, said in an interview. "Aside from the fact that the Palestine Authority is a dictatorial, corrupt society which is not likely to make real peace with a democracy, and that they still talk of liberating all of Palestine — despite all that, the minimum the Palestinians say they want, which is probably less than they ultimately want, is far more than the Israelis are able safely to give away."

Health Minister Tzahi Hanegbi, among the few Netanyahu allies in a cabinet full of rivals, said the bitterness of last week's events comes from "the casualties, but no less because of the forecasts we made when we were in the opposition. These forecasts are coming true before our very eyes. We cried out from the [parliament], in the squares and in the streets, 'Don't give them guns!'"

And yet the implications of arguments such as Bar Illan's and Hanegbi's prove too much for Netanyahu to swallow, at least so far. They imply — or state outright — that peace talks with Arafat are a bust and it is time to let a bad idea die. Netanyahu cannot do that without destroying vital relationships with the outside world and the swing voters who put him in power.

"The thing with this guy," said political scientist Yaron Ezrahi, "is that he has . . . two [inclinations] which are not compatible. On the one hand he is genuinely not committed to the peace process, on the other he is committed to be a political success. If you see that when you are derailing the peace process you are the object of contempt and pressure, how do you deal with that?"

A gifted practitioner of what Israelis call *hasbara*, which translates more or less as public relations, Netanyahu's first instinct has been to compensate for inaction with a gushing flow of fluent argument — rebutting the "wild and false incitement on the part of the Palestinian Authority," insisting that "peace is our deepest aspiration" and maintaining that there has been far more progress in the talks than Arafat has been willing to admit.

Netanyahu is losing that argument with every audience he really cares about: the Clinton administration, the European powers he was wooing until forced to cut short his tour week, his key Arab allies in Egypt and Jordan, and most of all the domestic voters who believed his promise to make peace "carefully, responsibly."

A Guilty CIA Would Not Absolve Blacks

COMMENT
William Raspberry

I DON'T know whether the allegations raised by the San Jose Mercury News — that the CIA played a leading role in introducing crack cocaine into America's ghettos — are true. I don't know enough to have a rational opinion on the veracity of the report that has been sweeping the country over the Internet.

The fact that the leading news organizations haven't come up with their own versions of the story suggests they have made inquiries and come away unconvinced. But I was around when The Washington Post was running alone with the Watergate story. That others came late to the story did not make it false.

Nor does the fact that the allegations are so awful make them unbelievable. Wasn't the government involved in other, clearly illegal, activities to raise money for Nicaraguan Contras? What's so unthinkable about the idea that they might have smuggled cocaine, retailed through West Coast gangs, to achieve the same end? And as those who believe the Mercury News story point out, didn't J. Edgar Hoover's FBI plant evidence against black militants? Didn't the government sponsor that Tuskeegee experiment in which blacks with syphilis were allowed to go without treatment? Doesn't that prove that when it comes to black Americans, nothing's beyond the pale?

The CIA denies the story, but what else would it say? And it says it will make an all-out internal investigation, but what would that prove? The agency, by its very nature, is hardly in a position to lay its operations open for public scrutiny.

As I say, I don't know if the allegations are credible. But one aspect intrigues me — the willingness of so many black leaders to take the story literally. That no doubt results in part from the bitter memories of Tuskeegee. But a bigger part, I suspect, is the idea that if it's true the CIA helped to create the crack cocaine scourge that is devastating our black communities, then it isn't our fault.

It's an interesting concept. It's not as if the CIA is accused of putting essence of crack into the drinking water in black neighborhoods, so creating a generation of unwitting addicts. The accusation is that cocaine — already in use — became more plentiful as a result of the CIA's dealings with Contras on the one hand and Crips and Bloods on the other.

Suppose the accusation is true. Would that absolve those who launder the money that provides the narcotics traffic with its capital, or the people who steal, intimidate and kill to get hold of the stuff, who turn it into crack, who sell it and, above all, who buy and use the deadly stuff?

The fact that these other players are involved does not, of course, absolve the CIA. If it is proved guilty, then it should be exposed and cleaned up, and the guilty operatives and their knowledgeable supervisors should go to jail.

Then what? Federal reparations for crack addicts, to the families of the casualties of crack-spawned violence? Parole for everyone serving time for drug-related offenses? Compensation for the gangs who, but for the boost in the supply of cocaine, might have given up trafficking and become bond brokers?

No. The point seems to be to exempt black Americans from any responsibility for the problems that are killing us, to absolve us of our bad choices and transform us into pure victims of sinister outsiders.

But whether the CIA is guilty or not, don't we have to take some responsibility for our disatrous choices?

Japanese PM Chooses Early Poll

Mary Jordan in Tokyo

WITH LOUD cheers of *Banzai!* and fists raised, Japanese lawmakers began the national campaign season last week after receiving official word that the prime minister had dissolved parliament and set elections for October 20.

Less than five minutes after filing into the parliament chamber, the lawmakers hurried out, heading for pep rallies and a campaign that will test Prime Minister Ryutaro Hashimoto's bet that he can stay in power. Hashimoto decided to call snap elections in part because he hopes that the public will look favorably on his recent dealings with President Clinton on the vexing issue of how to reduce the presence of U.S. troops in Okinawa. By law, Hashimoto could have called elections anytime before next July.

Japanese media and Hashimoto supporters have played up the fact that in his eight-month tenure he has met four times with Clinton and the two are on a first-name basis, a familiarity that carries immeasurable weight here.

"I don't know what my score is with the public, but this is the moment to humbly ask the Japanese people which way Japan should go," Hashimoto told members of his ruling Liberal Democratic Party who gathered for a rally minutes after the parliament was dissolved.

As many as one-third of the members of the lower house may lose their seats in this election, the first conducted under campaign reforms that include new rules allowing for more flexibility in TV ads and more restrictions in financial contributions. A new party, headed by two popular young politicians, Naoto Kan and Yukio Hatoyama, is expected to be a vital factor in the October results. "Three years ago there was big shake-up [after the Diet was dissolved], but this time, a bigger quake is coming," said Kan, the current health minister, who is seen as a fresh face unafraid of criticizing the bureaucracy.

No campaign literature can be posted until the formal campaign begins on October 8, but the election was so widely anticipated that the campaign has been in high gear for weeks. Sensing growing cynicism toward politics, the major parties are trumpeting the same buzzword: "administration reform," or reduction of government bureaucracy.

This plan is not the same as efforts to streamline government in the US, because in Japan bureaucrats hold far more power than politicians. Slashing away at the bureaucracy, and splitting the almighty Finance Ministry in half to diffuse its power, as many have suggested, would amount to a shift in the nation's power structure.

Hashimoto's Liberal Democrats last week released a bold plan for slashing bureaucratic bloat: axing 10 of 20 ministries and firing 25 percent of government employees.

But on the streets of Tokyo, few said they believed the campaign pledges. "These promises have nothing to do with reality," said Eisaku Tanaka, an elderly man protesting outside the Diet.

U.S. Presses For All-Africa Crisis Force

Thomas W. Lippman

PRESIDENT CLINTON has approved an ambitious plan to organize, train, equip and help deploy an all-African military force of 10,000 troops to intervene in that continent's recurrent crises, senior administration officials said.

The African Crisis Response Force (ACRF) would be sent to countries where insurrection, civil war or genocide threaten mass civilian casualties. The ACRF would not intervene in the fighting but would set up and protect safe areas where civilians could gather and receive humanitarian aid.

It would cost about $25 million to set up the force next year and about $40 million if the troops had to be deployed, officials estimated. The United States is prepared to pick up half the cost, and is counting on European allies to come up with the rest, in cash or equipment and training. The U.S. also is prepared to airlift the troops on a deployment.

The force will be created only if the U.S. gets support from African and European countries. This week, Assistant Secretary of State George Moose is leading a team through Africa, soliciting troop commitments from Zimbabwe, Botswana, Ethiopia, Uganda, Tanzania, Kenya, Mozambique and Senegal. Senior officials said it will be another week or two before they receive definitive responses, but some African countries had expressed strong interest.

Administration teams also visited several European capitals last week to present the plan and seek commitments to help fund or otherwise support the force. An official briefed on the conversations with the Europeans said there were some "favorable initial responses." However, a Republican congressional staff member briefed by administration officials said the Europeans "have no interest, zippo," and added the GOP is strongly opposed.

"You can just say we hate this," the Republican staffer said, referring to the GOP's concern over costs and risks involved in U.S. participation in international peacekeeping efforts.

The intervention plan was developed over the past few months as it became clear U.N. Secretary General Boutros Boutros-Ghali would fail in his quest to organize a standby force for the central African country of Burundi under U.N. auspices, officials in Washington said. Driving the planning was administration fear that a rising tide of violence in Burundi would erupt into slaughter on a scale similar to that in neighboring Rwanda two years ago, with no international plan to stave off mass civilian casualties.

"People recognize we need to be a little more prepared for the next crisis," such as the genocide in Rwanda or the militia war in Liberia, one senior official said. "The brutal truth is, we are not."

"The idea is to work with the Organization of African Unity (OAU) and the European Union to help African countries develop their own capability so we don't face the 'our troops or no troops' dilemma," a State Department official said. Neither the United States nor any European country is willing to commit its troops to get involved in African conflicts, officials said, so the fallback plan is to enable Africans to do the job.

"This was intensely debated within the administration," an official said. But after a July 25 military coup in Burundi, State and Defense Department officials agreed on the need for a detailed response plan in the event of mass violence there. Clinton signed off on it earlier this month, officials said.

In the past, African states would have rejected such a plan because it would violate a founding principle of the OAU — that no member would intervene in another's internal affairs. But African leaders said that principle is no longer inviolable, as shown by deployment of a multinational African force in Liberia in 1990 and the joint decision of several countries to impose sanctions on Burundi.

Even so, some African states have reservations, either because they see it as abandonment by the U.S. and Europe or because they fear the crisis force would be a "stalking horse for an outside power."

Officials admitted there is a long list of questions, including: How can troops speaking English, French and Portuguese be organized into an effective unit? What happens if a neighboring country refuses to act as a staging site? How can the force deploy if the government of the country where the crisis occurs resists outside intervention?

Because of such questions, "there is no guarantee it will actually happen," an official said. "But if people consider all aspects of the problem they will support it."

Astronaut Glad to Be Back, Feeling Out of This World

Kathy Sawyer

IT COULD take weeks or months for her heart to recover from six months in weightlessness, and much longer for the bone in her legs, hips and spine to regain their normal mass. But outwardly, astronaut Shannon Lucid appears giddy with glee as she rediscovers Earth.

She has been laughing heartily since she was reunited with her husband, an oil company executive, and three grown children last week. She has felt the wind in her hair, taken a long hot shower (after nothing but sponge-offs since March) and eaten all the "gooey deserts" she wanted.

She is taking the weekend off to rest at home near NASA's Johnson Space Center in Houston, where the astronaut corps is based.

The biochemist, 53, spent most of her 188-day sojourn in space in close confinement with two successive crews of male cosmonauts aboard the Russian space station Mir. A veteran of four earlier shuttle flights (for a total of 223 days since 1985), she is the most experienced of all U.S. astronauts and the world record holder among women. (The overall world record is held by a Russian physician who stayed in space for 438 days.)

After her landing at Kennedy Space Center in Florida, President Clinton sent Lucid candy and phoned her. The next day he greeted her and the other Atlantis crew members on the airport tarmac as they returned to Houston. He praised her stamina and dedication. Signs in the crowd said, "Shannon is a Super Woman," and some spectators wore Shannon Lucid T-shirts.

"All I can say is, Houston never looked so good," she said.

Makers of potato chips and soft drinks have offered her cosmic quantities of the junk foods she craved in orbit. NASA is waiting to present her with almost 150 interview requests from media worldwide.

"Her spiritual and emotional state is terrific," said NASA administrator Daniel Goldin. "This is a tough, brilliant, determined human being. She's my hero."

In orbit, she was steadfastly good-natured in the face of numerous deprivations and a seven-week delay in her return. The American crew mates who finally rescued her expressed admiration for the fish-like grace with which she skinned this way and that through the labyrinthine tunnels of her home away from home.

Still, Lucid has suggested that weightlessness can get to be a drag. In keeping with Russian guidelines to counteract its physiological effects, she spent hours exercising on a treadmill. At one point, she said, "I told all the guys that I was never running again in my entire life."

She had warned her family to have "the big chair" empty and waiting for her at home.

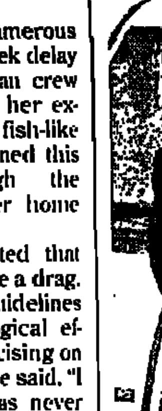
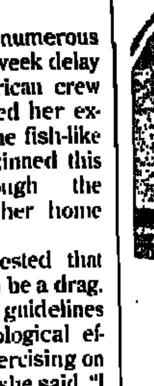
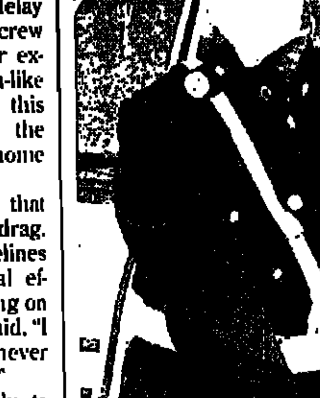
But exercise is still part of her job description. She is a civil servant with a mission to complete. She is a human guinea pig, a statistical sample of one, unique in the world.

A major goal of the joint U.S.-Russian flights, and of a planned international space station to replace Mir, is to learn how prolonged spaceflight affects the human mind and body and whether it will someday be feasible to send human expeditions to explore Mars.

Lucid's constant companions for weeks to come will be Gaylon Johnson, her personal flight surgeon, and "other rehabilitation physicians, physical therapists, a nurse, physical trainers, a dietitian, psychologists, a variety of people" assigned to help her recover, according to Roger Billica, chief of medical operations at JSC.

Johnson, who monitored her health from Russia during the flight, was to accompany Lucid to her home last week, medical officials said, though it was an open question whether he would be invited to stay.

As with other astronauts involved in life sciences research, NASA collects samples of her blood and urine from before, during and after the flight. And, while the experts have given her leave to abandon the hated treadmill, she must go through a program of exercises that will involve a stationary bicycle and swimming in a pool with a flotation vest, among other things. "We can work with her with great flexibility in that regard," Billica said.

A South Korean honour guard carries the coffin of a soldier killed in a battle against North Koreans who landed from a submarine last month
PHOTOGRAPH: YUN JAI-HYOUNG

S Korea Spy Scandal Dismays Washington

R. Jeffrey Smith

THE ALLEGATION last week that an official from South Korea, one of Washington's closest allies, would undertake to collect highly classified U.S. documents through an illicit channel in Washington has provoked dismay but little surprise among U.S. diplomats and intelligence professionals.

As a country with a large embassy staffed with officials who meet regularly with analysts in the U.S. military and the CIA, South Korea has long benefitted from direct, approved access to some of Washington's most sensitive secrets about its archenemy, North Korea, and other Asian security matters.

But Washington routinely withholds information about the sources and methods it uses to collect this information, and U.S. policy-making regarding the Korean peninsula has occasionally surprised South Korea.

In this context, U.S. officials said, the alleged illicit intelligence-gathering by Robert Chaegon Kim may have been meant to provide reassurance that Washington has Seoul's best interests at heart.

According to an FBI affidavit filed in the Kim case, a naval attache at the South Korean embassy, Captain Baek Dong-Il, obtained dozens of documents relating to North Korea, South Korea, and other nations in the region. Kim routinely removed the classified labels before mailing or delivering them, according to Baek's instructions.

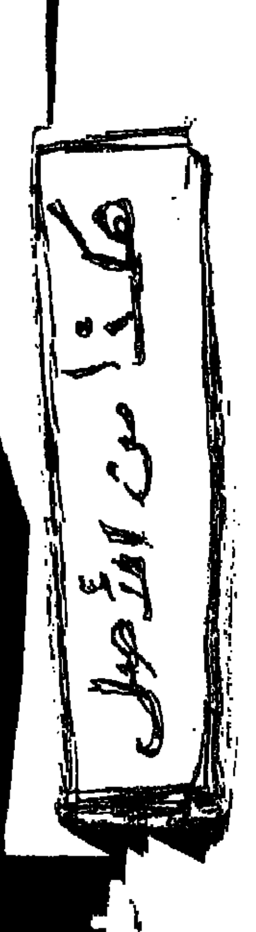
Baek was undoubtedly aware of the documents' sensitivity. He and Kim spoke about them elliptically in phone conversations wiretapped by the FBI, with Baek referring to "very many hot things."

Some of the documents given to Baek contained information "not releasable to South Korea" even though other portions had already been turned over through official channels, the FBI affidavit said. This suggests Baek may have been hunting for U.S. data deemed too sensitive for Seoul, such as U.S. reports on South Korea's leadership and military forces.

If the allegations are correct, Kim was an ideal source. His computer work in what is known as a SCIF (Secure Compartmented Information Facility) behind two secured doors at the Office of Naval Intelligence afforded him extraordinary access to a wide range of classified studies and analysis by many intelligence agencies.

An official of the South Korean Embassy said Seoul was investigating the matter and could not address the question of what Baek's motivations may have been. But he said "we feel irritated when such good friends mention South Korean intentions to spy on the U.S., because we are allies; in fact, the two closest allies."

U.S. officials say one reason for Baek's covert intelligence-gathering is Seoul's suspicion of Washington's slowly improving relations with North Korea.



East Caribbean Back as Key Transit Zone

Douglas Farah in Bridgetown, Barbados

THE ISLANDS of the eastern Caribbean have once again become a key transit zone for cocaine and heroin heading to the United States, as well as for the banks that launder the traffickers' illicit proceeds, according to law enforcement officials.

The resurgence of drug trafficking in recent months, after slacking off for nearly a decade, poses a potential threat to the region's fragile and ill-equipped governments, analysts say. Some express the fear that drug traffickers could attain a measure of control in a region only a few hundred miles from U.S. shores.

The traffickers also have turned a strategically located piece of U.S. soil, Puerto Rico, into what one drug enforcement agent described as an "island under siege." Once drugs enter Puerto Rico, they can be shipped anywhere in the United States without passing through customs.

"The Caribbean is a significant drug transit zone because there are lots of harbors, lots of airstrips and governments without a lot of money," said Jonathan Winer, deputy assistant secretary of state for law enforcement and crime. "Drug money is corrupting, and there is no question the traffickers are very good at infiltrating governments. Are any states taken over by them? Not yet. But it is a threat that is of real concern to the United States and Caribbean nations."

Another State Department official, Jane Becker, warned in an August 27 declassified overview of drug trafficking threats to the Caribbean that "drug traffickers have penetrated the highest levels of society and government institutions in Antigua, Trinidad and Tobago, St. Kitts and Nevis, Aruba, Jamaica and the Dominican Republic."

In the 1970s and early 1980s, much of the cocaine and marijuana bound for the United States was shipped through the Caribbean. In the mid-1980s, however, the flow began shifting toward Mexico as law enforcement agencies targeted the Caribbean for interdiction efforts. According to U.S. officials, 70 percent of the estimated 850 metric tons of cocaine shipped to the United States each year arrives by way of Mexico.

But officials say that as law enforcement efforts and public attention were focused on Mexico, drug traffickers recently began to reactivate their old Caribbean smuggling routes — leaving a trail of violence, drug addiction and political corruption throughout the islands.

Barry McCaffrey, the Clinton administration's drug czar, said his office estimates that about 154 metric tons of cocaine go through the eastern Caribbean to the United States each year, and another 180 metric tons transit through the region on the way to Europe and Russia.

Law enforcement officials said one factor contributing to the shift was that the level of resources dedicated to interdicting drugs in the Caribbean has fallen sharply in recent years. Funds for U.S. interdiction efforts in the Caribbean fell from $1.03 billion in fiscal 1992 to $569 million in fiscal 1995, according to a report last April by the congressional General Accounting Office.

Republican presidential candidate Bob Dole has blamed the Clinton administration for cutting the funding. But McCaffrey, in a telephone interview, said Congress has cut funding for drug interdiction efforts and international operations every year since fiscal 1993, which began during the Bush presidency.

Officials and analysts said traffickers are moving not just cocaine through the Caribbean, but heroin as well — along with hundreds of millions of dollars to be laundered.

Law enforcement officials said the renewed popularity of Caribbean smuggling routes underscores the fundamental problem in fighting the drug trade. Officials liken drug trafficking to water running downhill, always finding the path of least resistance — or to a balloon that when squeezed in one place, bulges someplace else.

Traffickers are finding that it is now sometimes faster and cheaper to deliver drugs via Puerto Rico than Mexico, said Felix Jimenez, the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration's special agent in charge of the Caribbean field division. The Mexican trafficking organizations often add a surcharge to Colombian products, and they have grown so big they can compete against, not just cooperate with, the Colombian organizations, he said.

As a result, "today, Puerto Rico is an island under siege by the increasing problems of drug trafficking," according to Jimenez. "Puerto Rico is the epicenter of the Caribbean drugs *en route* to the U.S. mainland, Europe and Canada."

The drugs often are brought to islands in the eastern Caribbean by airplanes or ships that drop their cargo in the sea, where it is picked up by small "go-fast boats" and taken to stash houses. The drugs are then taken to Puerto Rico, often in similar fashion. Using the satellite-based Global Positioning System, traffickers can pinpoint the drug drops with great accuracy.

Jimenez said violent crime is increasing throughout virtually all of the Caribbean. In part, he said, the increase is due to turf wars among Dominican drug trafficking groups working with Colombian cartels. Another factor is that traffickers have begun paying their local contacts with drugs, not cash. This has led to a skyrocketing drug addiction rate in the region, Jimenez and other Caribbean analysts said.

Puerto Rico has the highest per capita murder rate in the United States, Jimenez said, and 64 percent of the 850 murders there in 1995 were drug-related. The situation has deteriorated to the point where the National Guard has taken over more than 70 housing projects.

The tiny countries in the eastern Caribbean are at great risk because most have populations of only a few hundred thousand and meager resources to fight drug traffickers, while relatively small amounts of drug money can buy government ministries and central banks.

On top of the money made from drug transshipment, some Caribbean countries, where offshore banking is protected by strict confidentiality laws, are attracting hundreds of millions of dollars in drug money that is laundered through local banks.

"Money laundering represents a new threat because those people are interested in entering the political process of power," said Sandro Calvani, director of the Caribbean regional office of the U.N. International Drug Control Program. "They are trying to short-circuit the democratic process to get power through money. It is an extremely worrying and totally different process, going from illicit business to illicit power."

Workers in Antigua unload produce from Dominica. But increasingly the trade in the eastern Caribbean is in drugs, which pose a threat to the region's fragile governments
PHOTOGRAPH: PHILIP WOLMUTH

Want a U.S. Job? Prove You're Clean

Leef Smith

THE SIGN taped to the front window of the Home Depot in Alexandria delivers a warning to job-seekers. "We test all applicants for illegal drugs," the placard reads in bold orange letters. "If you use drugs, don't bother to apply."

Home Depot tests every one of its more than 90,000 employees nationwide for drug use — from its chief executive down to the clerk who helps customers select nails and lumber — before they are hired or promoted. Prospective employees who test positive for illegal substances are turned away; employees who test positive are fired.

Ten years ago, that kind of systematic testing was virtually unheard-of in the private sector. Today, experts say, it is the norm. The number of major U.S. corporations that use drug testing has risen 277 percent since widespread testing began in 1987, according to a nationwide survey.

Most of the boom occurred from 1988 to 1993, as federal regulations mandated testing for a growing list of professions, but the ranks of employees being tested continue to grow.

Drug-testing experts estimate that one-third of all new U.S. hires will be screened this year, more than ever before. If on-the-job screening is included, as many as 30 million U.S. workers are subject to testing annually. And with public concern growing about rising illegal drug use among young people, testing is likely to become even more common.

"The number of people being tested has exponentially increased," said Eric Greenberg, director of management studies for the American Management Association, which represents 9,000 companies that employ 25 percent of the U.S. work force and has been studying on-the-job drug testing since 1987. "What was once very, very rare has become routine."

Federal regulations mandate testing of about 8.5 million workers, including many who work for government contractors or in jobs where safety is an issue.

Many area corporate officials say required drug testing helps them attract better applicants and cuts down on workplace accidents, workers compensation claims and sick days.

Although the nation's largest corporations led the drug-screening charge — 98 percent of Fortune 200 companies use drug tests to screen potential employees — smaller companies have jumped on the bandwagon to avoid attracting drug users who already were screened out by the competition, experts say.

From the start, drug testing has faced significant opposition from civil liberties groups. The American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) denounces the process as a waste of time and a violation of privacy rights.

But a national poll conducted last year by Gallup and the Institute for a Drug Free Workplace showed growing support for screening out illegal drug users. In the survey of 1,006 white- and blue-collar workers, 38 percent said they believe drug testing is a necessity, up from 26 percent in 1989. An additional 38 percent supported drug testing despite having some reservations about it.

The Gallup poll also found that 70 percent of workers favored denying jobs to applicants who test positive.

However, civil liberties groups contend that a decade of widespread testing has failed to produce substantial evidence that screening curbs workplace problems and drug abuse. "The evidence shows that [drug testing] is not only morally wrong but a colossal waste of corporate money," said Lewis Maltby, director of the ACLU's Workplace Rights Project.

"The truth of the matter is that most of the people who are fired [after a drug test] never came to work stoned," Maltby said. "They were probably smoking [marijuana] at home on a Saturday night. They shouldn't be fired for what they do in their off time unless it affects their job performance."

The management association's Greenberg agrees that there are not enough statistics available to show whether on-the-job testing cuts down on overall drug use, but he said it does help firms identify specific drug users.

Officials with SmithKline Beecham, one of the nation's largest laboratories, which conducted more than 3.75 million drug tests last year, say that the share of positive tests has fallen by nearly two-thirds since 1987, from 18.1 to 6.7 percent.

Urine tests comprise about 90 percent of the drug screening conducted today, although some laboratories are beginning to test hair and sweat. Urine tests usually cost $35 to $40 and screen for marijuana — which can be detected up to a month after it is used — and cocaine, opiates, amphetamines and PCP.

A drug-testing information hot line sponsored by the National Organization for the Reform of Marijuana Laws receives as many as 400 calls a week, mostly from people trying to beat drug screens, group officials said. Some callers try to change the results by diluting the marijuana in their bodies with lots of fluid, swapping their urine with someone else's or adding chemicals to their urine.

"We get calls from people who say, "I'm just about to drink a quart of bleach. Is that okay?" said deputy executive director Allen St. Pierre. "It speaks volumes about people's desperation to pass these tests."

Some experts on illegal drug use who once said drug testing was unnecessary are becoming more supportive. They say testing might help reverse the recent rise in drug use among young people. New federal surveys have shown a 110 percent increase in teenage drug use from 1992 to 1995.

"Now with the rising use of marijuana among the young, I support it," said Eric Wish, director of the Center for Substance Abuse Research at the University of Maryland. "Still, I don't know of any evidence that someone who casually uses marijuana . . . has more accidents than anyone else."

Yo Ho Ho and Not Much Fun

Jonathan Yardley

UNDER THE BLACK FLAG:
The Romance and the Reality of Life Among the Pirates
by David Cordingly
Random House. 296pp. $25

THE purpose of this entirely engaging and informative book is "to examine the popular image of pirates today, to find out where this image came from, and to compare it with the real world of the pirates." David Cordingly's focus is on "the pirates of the Western world, and particularly on the great age of piracy, which began in the 1650s and was brought to an abrupt end around 1725, when naval patrols drove the pirates from their lairs and mass hangings eliminated many of their leaders." Readers whose notions of piracy were shaped by Peter Pan and The Pirates Of Penzance had best beware: Cordingly's tale is a bloody one, and it does nothing to heighten piracy's peculiar romance.

But that romance is very real. Pirates have been celebrated and glorified from the days of Daniel Defoe, one of their original chroniclers, to those of Errol Flynn, even unto our own. Cordingly thinks this may be explained by "the exotic locations where many of the pirates operated," the "romance of the sea," the appeal of "flawed characters" and "the powerful attraction of the strong and ruthless man who sweeps a woman off her feet and against all opposition carries her away to another life."

But the distance between romance and reality is probably greater in regard to the pirate than to any other mythologized figure, the American cowboy included. So it is both useful and extremely interesting to have a cold dose of the truth. Cordingly, formerly on staff at the National Maritime Museum in Greenwich, England, has done his research with daunting thoroughness, as a result of which he probably knows more about pirates than anyone else alive. What he has written in Under The Black Flag, though, is no pedant's accumulation of archival trivia but a witty, spirited account that is aimed at the serious general reader.



Life on the high seas . . . Mary Read, a soldier turned pirate (left) and (right) Captain Kidd in chains NATIONAL MARITIME MUSEUM, GREENWICH

The unsurprising result of Cordingly's research is the disclosure that pirates were nasty, brutish, and mostly led short lives; unsurprising, that is, because surely only the most thoroughly brainwashed really believe that pirates were out of J.M. Barrie by way of Walt Disney.

What really is surprising, though, is that in one respect the pirates of the late 17th and early 18th centuries were generations ahead of their more mannerly contemporaries in conventional society. While the good people of Europe lived their lives according to the dictates of monarchies or other autocracies, the pirates were the original democrats. They came together voluntarily — except for black African slaves and others who had been impressed into service — and lived according to rules set by themselves:

"A hundred years before the French Revolution, the pirate companies were run on lines in which liberty, equality and brotherhood were the rule rather than the exception. In a pirate ship, the captain was elected by the votes of the majority of the crew and he could be deposed if the crew were not happy with his performance. The crew, and not the captain, decided the destination of each voyage and whether to attack a particular ship or to raid a coastal village."

This remarkable aspect of pirate life — proof positive that there can be honor among thieves — is reason enough to mythologize the buccaneers, but it is the swashbuckling side of pirate life to which we are attracted. The truth is something else again. A man who had the misfortune to be held captive on a pirate ship in 1722 found himself amid "a vile crew of miscreants, to whom it was a sport to do mischief, where prodigious drinking, monstrous cursing and swearing, hideous blasphemies, and open defiance of Heaven, and contempt of hell itself, was the constant enjoyment . . ."

Though a handful of women sailed aboard pirate ships, openly or in disguise, the innocent woman who ran afoul of a pirate crew was a likely target for rape and, once the crew's collective appetite had been sated, disfigurement or murder.

A handful or pirates were educated, an even smaller number were black sheep of the privileged classes. Mostly, though, they were ordinary seamen, who for one reason or another "came together in an uneasy partnership, attracted by the lure of plunder and the desire for an easy life." That for whatever reason they governed themselves by enlightened rules of representative government is remarkable bordering on miraculous, but otherwise they were approximately as romantic as slave traders. "Yo ho ho and a bottle of rum" may be barrels of fun, but it is all fiction.

Thelma and Louise Face Life on the Open Range

Grace Lichtenstein

OUT OF EDEN
by Kate Lehrer
Harmony. 339pp. $25

WHAT IF Emma Bovary had shunned marriage, had turned her back on France, and had lit out for the American prairie to become a homesteader alongside Lily Bart? That's not quite the premise of this historical novel, but it conveys the spirit.

The year is 1880. A young, privileged American widow, Lydia Fulgate, and her French friend, Charlotte Duret, are itching to escape the manners and social rigidity of Parisian life. Realizing that the conventional route open to them — marriage — will stunt their spirits and intellectual curiosity, they decide to run away to America, where they think they'll be able to discover their true selves in an egalitarian society. "The beauty of living in Kansas is that we won't have to renounce the world," says Charlotte; "instead we can create one that suits us."

What they encounter instead is an existence far more complex, and a web of powerful passions far more entangling, than anything their rational minds could have spun.

Kate Lehrer, whose novel, When They Took Away The Man In The Moon, also dealt with the conflicting desires of a strong woman, stakes out fascinating turf here. The American frontier has never lacked for heroines, real or fictional. But they tend to fall into three groups: tramps, outlaws and Conestoga captives. Lehrer's protagonists are, on the surface, much more like their wealthy brethren, the male American and European ranchers who were drawn to the West by the promise of unfettered economic and personal freedom.

Lydia and Charlotte wind up choosing a railroad stop called Huddleston. They build sturdy houses facing one another, with acres of treeless expanse and sand hills surrounding them. They buy livestock and plant crops, confident (as are pioneers of the time) that cultivation will tame the arid and windy weather conditions.

In Paris, Charlotte and Lydia had a pleasant circle of friends, yet they had to disguise themselves as men in order to enjoy the cerebral and sensual pleasures of cafe life. Once in Kansas, they are startled to discover not only that other women are hostile toward them but that there are few pleasures to savor amid the harsh everyday reality of the plains. As Lydia explains to French visitors to Twin House Farm, "All the single men" in Kansas "are looking for wives to do household chores and help them with the farmwork." Frontier or no, Western women are treated as much like chattel as their French cousins.

For a few years, the two women, helped by their loyal and tough Irish servant, Norah, are almost able to make a go of it. Lehrer paints colorful tableaux of them playing midwives in the birthing of lambs, battling storms and drought, galloping on horseback across the landscape, retaliating against would-be rapists, and arguing in a public debate for women's suffrage. But their quest for self-knowledge is undone by feelings no more controllable than the weather. Charlotte aches with longing for Lydia's married brother. Lydia is seduced, willingly, by a Chicago financier for whom her fierce autonomy is an aphrodisiac. Worst of all, the women's friendship is severed by multiple crises involving money.

Toward the end, they even contemplate perverting all their ideals by transforming their twin house into a high-class brothel. "Don't you understand?" Lydia demands. "Our quest for self-knowledge was as frivolous as our former concern with going to the right parties." Their dreams ultimately are trampled by the stubborn truth of the prairie and by their unacknowledged need for intimacy.

This is terrific material for full-bodied storytelling, although Lehrer doesn't quite achieve the exalted Willa Catherlike heights she sets for herself and her characters keep saying the same things over and over again. But what's best about Out Of Eden is its brave, complicated ideas about women and the West.

The Lawyer in His Labyrinth

Francine Prose

ABOUT SCHMIDT
by Louis Begley
Knopf. 274pp. $23

LIKE many of us, Albert Schmidt — the retired lawyer at the center of Louis Begley's new novel — spends a certain fraction of his time fretting about personal finances, tallying the figures upon which his future depends. But among the significant differences between the Schmidt and (one assumes) most of Begley's readers is the magnitude of the numbers these calculations involve: "He would have to take almost three million of his cash and invest it in . . . the purchase of a new house he didn't want and, in theory, didn't need . . . He would still have the payments from his firm — one hundred and eighty thousand per year — and the income from the balance of his savings, perhaps another hundred and fifty thousand tax free . . . It occurred to Schmidt that, to the average American, this would seem a pretty good deal for a single sixty-year-old codger with no dependents, but was the average American accustomed to living as Schmidt had lived? Had he worked as hard?"

Poor Schmidt! No matter how many times he totals these impressive sums, his current existence falls painfully short of the comfortable and reassuring balance he might have predicted. His wife — whom he loved dearly despite their unsatisfying sexual relations and his own compensatory casual adulteries — has recently died a harrowing death, from cancer. His reliable milieu of money, tradition and privilege has begun to crumble and vanish, retirement has made him feel like "an unwanted ghost," and the prestigious law firm at which he has spent his career is trying to renegotiate and reduce the benefits they owe him.

His only daughter, Charlotte, has somehow grown up to be a chilly and heartless "iron-pumping yuppie," with no inconvenient moral qualms about her "mercenary and parasitic" job as a public relations consultant for a tobacco company. And as if all this weren't troubling enough, Charlotte is about to be married to an abrasive young bankruptcy lawyer — a "vulgar" and ambitious employee of Schmidt's former firm, the son of two psychiatrists, and, worst of all, a member of Schmidt's least favorite ethnic group. ("His Charlotte, his brave, wondrous Charlotte, intended to forsake all others and cleave to a wonk, a turkey, a Jew!")

If the sorrows of old "Schmidtie" strike us as somewhat short of fully tragic, less than deeply moving, it's clearly intentional; Begley means us to keep our distance from his smug, officious hero. The self-regarding, fussy Schmidt is a virtual compendium of repellent and (one can only hope) outmoded opinions about propriety and social class, race and gender. Nor is there anything about him that we might call charismatic or endearing — no sudden flashes of wit, bravado or charm to make us briefly overlook his wide array of character flaws.

IT'S THIS that makes Begley's novel most interesting and nervy. In an era in which critics enjoin writers to make their characters appealing it takes considerable bravery to ignore such critical admonitions.

About Schmidt rather valiantly struggles against this current. And though the reader keeps waiting uneasily for some cataclysmic or revelatory event to clear the scales from Schmidtie's eyes and turn him into a sharing and caring human, Begley is too honest and conscientious a writer to call in the *deus ex machina* of easy and unearned redemption. For a while, it seems as if the surprisingly rapid intimacies of Schmidt's new friendship with Charlotte's future mother-in-law, Renata will work some therapeutic magic on him. But Renata's first loyalty is to her son — a fact that undermines the good effects of her attentions.

Nor is Schmidt entirely transformed by his love affair with Carrie, an earthy and hard-working young waitress at a local restaurant. Only at the very end of the novel — after a near-disaster — does Schmidt appear to make some slight moral progress.

About Schmidt offers us little in the way of coziness or consolation. We don't feel better about the human condition after having read it. We do, however, admire Louis Begley's honesty, his refusal to equivocate or falsify, to prettify his portrait of a vanishing milieu. His novel is comical, tough, unsparing; it's as if Louis Auchincloss had exchanged the kid gloves for brass knuckles.

A different world . . . Mass migrations are taking place around China as workers flock to the new special economic zones such as Shenzhen, across the border from Hong Kong, in search of a share of the new prosperity PHOTOGRAPH: DON McPHEE

Is China trading places?

Globalisation is producing a stampede to embrace rampant capitalism, where the rich seek to minimise their taxes, argues **Simon Hoggart**

I HAVE seen the future, and it stinks. You can get a good look at it in the Chinese city of Xin Hui, which you've probably never heard of, since in Chinese terms it's a small conurbation of just 800,000 people. I went there recently to make a BBC television programme about globalisation, travelling in the company of Cliff Lewer, a Derbyshire businessman working for British Polythene.

Among many other things, BP makes plastic shopping bags and until recently it made them in Telford, Shropshire. But because Chinese labour is much cheaper than British, the world price of plastic bags has dropped, by between one-third and one-quarter of a penny. It's a piffling sum, but the Xin Hui factory makes 21 million bags a week (many ready-printed "Keep Britain Tidy"), and this saving translates into enormous sums for the big stores.

Realising that he could no longer sell pricier British-made bags, Cliff set off for China, more or less on his own, and established a factory on what was, a few years ago, a paddy field. Several times a year he takes a plane from Hong Kong, then a high-speed ferry up the Pearl river to Xin Hui, staying when he gets there in what used to be the guest house for senior communist officials. On most trips he's the only European he sets eyes on.

Cliff is fairly devout, so on Sundays he goes to Xin Hui's now legal Christian church, where the mournful hymns familiar from home are sung in Chinese. British Polythene's Chinese workers are paid a basic rate of around 77 cents an hour, which is one-tenth of what the bag makers of Telford earned. These are good wages, vastly better than the average $300 per year still earned in the many Chinese provinces where liberalisation has not yet begun.

So desperate are Chinese people to get work in the new special economic zones that mass migrations are taking place around the country. On the edge of Shenzhen, the boom city just over the border from Hong Kong, there is an immigration post not to keep foreigners out but to bar Chinese people who want a share in the new prosperity. There are now 150 million people in southeast China alone working in manufacturing industry, far more than in the whole of the European Union put together or the United States. Surprisingly, Britain is the largest European investor.

In the cities themselves you can see rampant capitalism on the move, like time-lapse films showing a flower grow in 30 seconds. Vast Mercedes cars clog crowded alleyways nudging against rickshaw drivers.

Saying that someone is obsessed by globalisation is as absurd as complaining that a farmer is obsessed by the weather. He has to be. The question is not if we can stop the process — we could, but as Alvin Toffler says, "then prepare to become Cambodia" — but how can we cope with the appalling problems it may produce?

The Savanarola of globalisation is Professor Ian Angell of the London School of Economics. He foresees a future of massive social upheaval. Since jobs, money, goods, information and people can be transferred around the globe almost without restrictions, he says that the better off, those whose mental skills are marketable anywhere, will simply contract out of the existing state.

Already — especially in the US and increasingly in Britain — they will live in secure, closed estates. As they drive their children to school in foreign cars, they by-pass state education, the national health service, public transport. Soon they will by-pass taxes, choosing to live where they have to pay the lowest rates.

What keeps them in their native country? Friends, family, familiarity, the language. But would that survive the promise of real wealth abroad? And much they might be troubled by the poverty around them, plus growing social disorder and crime, they will probably cling on to their money.

The new processes are well under way. The British Treasury announced this year that it was unexpectedly missing $6.2 billion in value added tax receipts. Much of this has been squirrelled away legally in cyberspace. Any multinational company can adjust its affairs to pay the minimum tax possible on every transaction.

THE information superhighway turns out to be packed with unmarked white vans full of used fifties. Nationality is just another commodity to be traded these days. You can buy full residence and employment rights in the US for $1 million. Canada is much cheaper, and gets you into the North American Free Trade Agreement, which is why around 80 per cent of rich Hong Kong citizens choose to flee there. But you can pick Honduras, a bargain at $30,000. For the well-to-do, the right nationality is an optional extra.

All this is rapidly diminishing the role of politicians. Their traditional main job, of raising money and spending it, is more and more difficult. Increasingly they can only raise the taxes the market will tolerate. Pay the unemployed more, and you have to increase taxes, which drives away companies, which means more unemployed. This isn't some demented Chicago analysis: it's what's happening in Europe.

And the disappearance of manufacturing jobs is not all bad news. If Nike trainers cost less because they're assembled in Indonesia for 20 cents an hour instead of the $12 an hour the company paid in Oregon, then the consumer wins and the Indonesians get a wage, of sorts, and often paid to children. So in some respects we are all better off. Meanwhile governments increasingly become facilitators, abandoning ideology in order to suck what investment they can into the country.

There are encouraging signs. The biggest economy in the world is the US, where they have 5.1 per cent unemployment and a growth rate which, at 4.8 per cent, any European leader would kill for. Its economy remains incredibly flexible, and implies that the West could survive and even prosper, even while globalisation is spreading wealth to the old Third World. What this means socially we don't know. Professor Angell predicts hordes of the itinerant unemployed terrorising the land. Governments, which once offered carrots and sticks, will only offer sticks in the shape of a ferocious police force used to protect the better-off.

Cities will begin to see themselves as the only important economic units; London, for example, on its own one of the world's more successful economic centres, might simply decide to stop sharing its wealth with the rest of the UK. The new greater Hong Kong will keep out most Chinese; what's to stop London keeping out the poorer Brits? Property prices already work that way.

Or the greater prosperity — and the fact that there is ample food grown in the world for everyone — could, through miracles of social and economic engineering, lead to a better, happier world. Or somewhere in between. As H G Wells said, the future is never as futuristic as you think.

Moves to purge child labour

Roger Cowe

REEBOK has called on arch rival Nike, the market leader in trainers, to help it end child labour and improve conditions at their Asian factories.

Paul Fireman, the chairman and chief executive, has written to his opposite number at Nike, Phil Knight, proposing joint monitoring of factory conditions. "With Nike's leadership in size and Reebok's experience in human rights, a collaboration could be awesome," he said.

Nike said it had not had chance to consider Reebok's suggestion, but working conditions were a company priority.

The move was welcomed by the charity Christian Aid, which has campaigned against exploitation of workers in the footwear and clothing industries.

Reebok and Nike — who together sell 60 per cent of branded trainers — have come under pressure in Britain and the United States in campaigns against child labour and exploitation of Asian workers.

Reebok has taken a public stand on social issues, launching the Reebok Human Rights Award in 1988 and adopting a Human Rights Production Standard in 1992. Nike has also recently highlighted its concern for labour conditions.

In Brief

THE Federal Reserve bucked pressure from the bulk of its own regional governors to restrain the economy when it refused to raise interest rates and kept the key federal funds rate at 5.25 per cent.

SECURITIES group UBS lost nearly $750,000 through the activities of a rogue trader who defied orders on secret dealing and hid his trades. American-born Mark Larkin has been expelled from the City.

JERSEY'S parliament has approved controversial legislation to allow limited liability partnerships to be registered in the island. It will protect partners' assets in the event of a successful claim for damages, with only the individual partner at fault deemed to be liable.

DEBT-ENCUMBERED Eurotunnel risks being placed into administration under French law unless there is a realistic prospect of agreeing the restructuring of its $12.4 billion borrowings with its consortium of 220 international banks.

THE British government was cheered by latest figures showing a $800 million surplus on the balance of payments in the second quarter, while latest estimates of GDP growth brought the Treasury closer to this year's 2.5 per cent target.

BRITISH Telecom is to invest more than $1.7 billion in a fledgling French telecommunication venture effectively controlled by the French conglomerate Compagnie Générale des Eaux.

THE BBC has signed two deals with commercial partners, heralding the launch of subscription television channels in Britain and the US.

THE WORLD Bank is planning a new watchdog to monitor the social effect of its development programmes, to counter claims that its policies are failing the world's poorest people.

FOREIGN EXCHANGES

	Sterling rates September 30	Sterling rates September 23
Australia	1.9747-1.9770	1.9640-1.9663
Austria	16.76-16.78	16.56-16.58
Belgium	49.03-49.11	48.46-48.55
Canada	2.1288-2.1307	2.1270-2.1288
Denmark	9.15-9.16	9.04-9.05
France	8.06-8.07	7.96-7.98
Germany	2.3836-2.3856	2.3551-2.3573
Hong Kong	12.08-12.09	12.03-12.04
Ireland	0.9764-0.9789	0.9710-0.9725
Italy	2,378-2,380	2,368-2,371
Japan	174.04-174.21	170.90-171.12
Netherlands	2.8734-2.8763	2.8398-2.8427
New Zealand	2.2330-2.2372	2.2280-2.2317
Norway	10.16-10.18	10.05-10.06
Portugal	242.39-242.59	239.78-240.04
Spain	200.66-200.84	198.08-198.24
Sweden	10.34-10.36	10.26-10.28
Switzerland	1.9558-1.9608	1.9213-1.9237
USA	1.5630-1.5638	1.5465-1.5573
ECU	1.2509-1.2520	1.2370-1.2379

FTSE 100 Share Index up 33.9 at 3963.8. FTSE 250 Index up 3.6 at 4301.1. Gold down $1.00 at $380.00.



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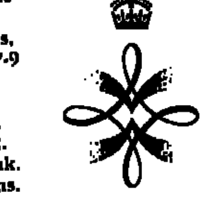
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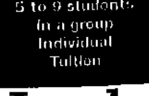
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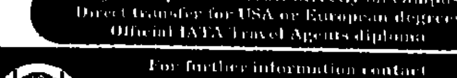
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GUARDIAN WEEKLY
October 6 1996



East meets West . . . Endo in his writing was frequently compared to Graham Greene PHOTO: ROBIN LAURANCE

Words across the chasm

Shusaku Endo

NO JAPANESE writer has been quite so well known among such a wide variety of the public, in his own country and abroad, as Shusaku Endo, who has died aged 73. He was highly regarded for his novels, short stories and plays, which brought him honours, doctorates and numerous literary awards, and led him to be spoken of frequently as a likely Nobel Prize winner. For many readers in the 25 countries where his books were published, he was the most accessible interpreter of East to West in contemporary literature.

Endo was born in Tokyo but grew up in Dalian, in occupied Manchuria, where his father worked for a bank and where he attended elementary school. The disintegration of his parents' marriage affected him deeply and there are traces of his memories of this painful time in several of his short stories. When his parents eventually divorced, he returned to Japan with his mother. Soon afterwards she converted to Christianity, and it was through her influence and that of the devout aunt with whom they shared a home that Endo became a Roman Catholic, one of only half a million in Japan.

This sense of being an outsider, acquired through his conversion, was a crucial factor in Endo's development as a novelist and in his ambivalent attitude towards his own country. "I had been baptised as a young boy and was marked out by my peers as a follower of a foreign creed," he once wrote. "I was never physically attacked, but I spent my student days as the object of contempt. For me, Japan [then at war with China] had become a loathsome country, and I agonised daily over how I could bring myself to fight for Japan when the day came."

After briefly attending Waseda University, where he had intended to study medicine, he decided instead to read French Literature at Keio University. After a brief period of military service at the end of the second world war, he became one of the first Japanese students to be awarded a government scholarship to study abroad, and in 1950 he sailed for France. At the University of Lyon he specialised in the work of the Catholic novelists Georges Bernanos, Julien Green and François Mauriac and began to immerse himself in the new culture. "Optimistically, I began to believe I had taken the first steps towards acquiring an understanding of Europe," he wrote in his introduction to Foreign Studies (1989). "And yet, in about the middle of my second year, I learnt that towering beyond the hill I had scaled lay an enormous mountain . . . As a Japanese confronted with the tradition, rich cultural heritage and confidence of Europe, I came to sense a certain unfathomable distance."

It was this mountain, or gulf, between East and West, the conflict between Endo's Japanese Buddhist sensibilities and the tradition of Hellenistic Christianity inherited through baptism, that provides the central theme of much of his work, not least his masterpiece Silence (1967). This was first brought to the attention of readers in Britain by Graham Greene, a writer whom Endo admired and to whom he was often compared.

Endo saw it as one of his tasks as a writer to find "somewhere within the great symphony of Catholicism", to quote from his translator William Johnston's introduction to Silence, "a strain that fits the Japanese tradition and touches the Japanese heart". He took up the subject again in such later novels as The Samurai and Deep River, in some of his intensely personal short stories, as well as in his play The Golden Country. He even wrote A Life Of Jesus to show his countrymen that the Christian tradition might not be quite as alien as they imagined.

Endo tried to find a strain of Catholicism that touched the Japanese heart

After four years in France, Endo returned to Japan, and in 1954 won the prestigious Akutagawa Prize for his first novel, The White Man. The Sea And Poison, about a Japanese doctor forced to take part in the vivisection of prisoners-of-war, appeared in 1957.

Then came Volcano and When I Whistle, a wryly comic novel closely based on his own protracted experiences over three years in hospital wards where he endured numerous operations. Endo was dogged by ill health, but this never affected his good humour or his cheerful acceptance of misfortune. During one of his many operations, his heart stopped for a few seconds. "The doctors thought I was dead," he wrote later. "But the devil's own luck is with me, and I have managed to survive." And survive he did, with the help of his wife, with whom he lived in Tokyo, and his son, to become the leading writer of his day.

Endo was always eager to introduce foreigners to the wonders and mysteries of Japan. In 1989 I spent a month there at his invitation and to experienced at first hand his distinctive humour and generosity. The novelist and his friend Kenzo Kogi met me at Narita airport and I quickly realised Endo could go nowhere in his own country without being recognised, complimented and photographed. No Western writer would be so revered.

His manner was usually jokey and informal, reassuring and relaxed; he was much amused by cultural incongruities: the gaucheness of the Westerner coping with Japanese formality and vice versa. Though well versed in European literature, he never mastered much English, but retained some fluency in French.

There was nothing conventional about the tour of Japan that Endo arranged for me. It was typical of him that on my second night in Tokyo he should give a dinner party in a private room at the very same Chinese restaurant at which his fictional hero, Suguro, meets his mistress in Endo's 1988 novel, Scandal. "Do you recognise these surroundings?" he asked with a mischievous smile. "I thought it might make good copy for you."

In order to see authentic aspects of Tokyo, he recommended a visit to the docks and the fish market; on the southern island of Kyushu I was shown the places where the 16th century Jesuit missionaries (the subjects of his novel Silence) died for their faith; in Kyoto, he suggested certain temples and shrines, but I was to be sure to eat at the country's best restaurant and visit "le quartier rouge", he said with a twinkle. "Ask for Mr Ohtake and mention my name."

It was a name that guaranteed special treatment throughout Japan, and one that commanded respect and honour wherever he went.

Euan Cameron

Shusaku Endo, writer, born March 27, 1923; died September 29, 1996

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GUARDIAN WEEKLY
October 6 1996

Afghan victors put mercy to flight

The fanatical Taliban will impose stability through Islamic justice, writes **David Loyn** in Kabul

THE rotting bodies of Mohammed Najibullah, the former president, his brother, and two of his aides still hung in Kabul at the weekend, a humiliation and a warning. Every building along the road to the Afghan capital bears the scars of heavy fighting. Lorry containers are used as warehouses, shops and houses lie burst open by shellfire on the sand. It is like an archaeological site layered with the evidence of almost two decades of war. Mounds of shell cases lie at the side of the road, but the tanks that fired them have gone.

The Taliban Islamic militia conquered with stunning speed; claims at the weekend that they had moved north were not substantiated by witnesses, who said troops loyal to ousted President Burhanuddin Rabbani were manning a checkpoint just south of the town of Charikar, the provincial capital of Parwan, about 75km north of Kabul.

Even the Taliban forces have been surprised by the rapid pace of the retreat. Among Kabul's middle class there was panic. Traffic clogged the roads out of the city to the north as civil servants and the rich fled the Taliban advance. We were forced to carry a group of Taliban fighters into town; their lorry had broken down. They were country boys, awestruck at their command of the capital, and exhausted after a two-day battle that had brought them control of the country.

It took the fighters some hours to realise that the city was theirs but by midnight on Thursday last week they had secured most government buildings. Before dawn, crowds of children gathered to greet the Taliban reinforcements who followed the main attack in Toyota pick-up trucks.

Taliban fighters celebrate by the bodies of Mohammed Najibullah, the former Afghan president, and Shahpur Ahmadzai, right, his brother

At 1am, Taliban fighters approached the United Nations compound and asked to see the man they called the "special guest". Najibullah had lived under UN protection since the collapse of his communist regime four years ago. A Turkish UN official refused access to the guerrillas, but after an argument they forced their way in and seized Najibullah and his brother, Shahpur Ahmadzai.

Najibullah was shot in the side of the head and at first light his blood-soaked body, still in pyjamas, was hung from a traffic control point near the presidential palace. His brother, who had been held for five hours, was hanged alongside him.

The humiliation continued after their deaths. The bodies were swung around by rifle butts, to the delight of passing fighters. A cigarette was put between Najibullah's fingers, and banknotes pushed up the noses of both men, in a grotesque parody of honours given at a wedding ceremony.

The bodies were left to hang from the vantage point. Traffic police came to work as usual and stood at the side, directing traffic and pedestrians around the grim spectacle. Later, two of Najibullah's senior colleagues — his bodyguard, General Jafsar, and his aide, Tokhi — joined him hanging by the roundabout.

The public executions have horrified many residents of Kabul. The excesses of the mojahedin leaders who drove the communists from power had mellowed public opinion about Najibullah. Out of the hearing of Taliban soldiers, many people expressed their dismay.

At the weekend, Kabul radio confirmed the imposition of Taliban's version of *sharia* (Islamic law), and there were very few women on the streets. Otherwise, Kabul has been little affected by the change of government. Previous takeovers have been marked by looting. But for the most part, Taliban has kept its hands off. One Taliban soldier challenged me to put a $5 note into a pile of abandoned ammunition, claiming that it would still be there in a week.

The Taliban spiritual leader, Mullah Mohammed Omar Akhund, says he will not take any political position in the new government. He has announced that his movement now represents Afghanistan and is seeking recognition from the outside world. Islamic countries are dividing on predictable lines.

The number two in the movement, Mullah Mohammed Rabbani, is the most powerful figure in the new six-man government. Last week Mullah Rabbani outlined his movement's plans for a pure Islamic state governed by laws which will prevent women working or receiving education, and where television and any image of the human body are banned. Nine men have already had their hands cut off for stealing in Taliban areas.

The most visible sign of confidence that Taliban will bring stable government comes from Kabul's money-changers. The rate of the afghani to the dollar, 18,000 a week ago, is now less than 8,000. Every night and morning since Taliban arrived there has been heavy shellfire from the mountains north of here. But trade has quickly resumed.

Even as Taliban's men advanced through the dark suburbs of Kabul, the first lorryloads of grapes and melons began to head out for the Pakistani border.

In a sign that there might be further bloodshed, Taliban forces moved into position on Monday on the Salang highway north of Kabul to confront the Uzbek militia of General Rashid Dostam, a key warlord. However, there are signs that the parties may make a deal. — *The Observer*

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More than just a puppet of Moscow

OBITUARY

Mohammed Najibullah

MOHAMMED Najibullah, who has been murdered in Kabul aged 49, joins a long line of Afghan rulers who have died violently. Yet in a society that has known two decades of turbulence he may be remembered for the relative stability of his six years in power.

Najibullah was often simplistically described as a Soviet puppet or as a mass murderer because of his period running the Khad, the secret police. But he became a skilful and intelligent politician who kept the Afghan capital, Kabul, free of war and won the respect of its inhabitants, especially after it fell prey to the jealousies and in-fighting of the mojahedin. His diplomatic skill also modified Mikhail Gorbachev's rush to withdraw Soviet troops from Afghanistan so as to improve his regime's chances of staying in power.

Najibullah was born to a middle-class Pashtun family. He was a medical student and activist at Kabul university in the 1970s, when it bubbled with groups wanting to modernise a feudal country.

Some followed the Islamic path advocated by Burhanuddin Rabbani, who after exile in Pakistan became Afghanistan's president, soon after Najibullah's overthrow. For Najibullah the route was through the secular People's Democratic Party of Afghanistan, the only one of the three campus Marxist groups which identified with Moscow. The PDPA became the best organised, and it was no surprise when it mounted a successful coup in April 1978.

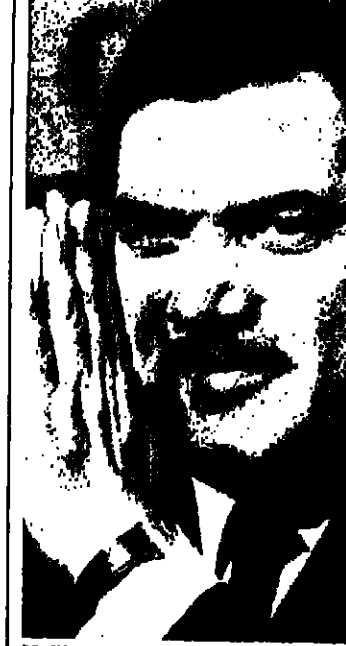
In power party divisions grew, based on ideology, the pace of the revolution, and clan and personality issues. Najibullah was a member of the Parcham wing, which fell out with the impatient, radicalising Khalq faction under Hafizullah Amin as it pushed village literacy drives and sweeping agricultural reform with little sensitivity to peasant conservatism. Coupled with the minimal role the regime gave Islam, its policies launched two decades of civil war. Najibullah fell out with the Khalq faction and went into exile until the December 1979 Soviet invasion. The Red Army's arrival reinforced the view that the Kabul regime was an alien, atheist implant, giving new impetus to the civil war and turning it into a classic cold war struggle. The United States and Pakistan's military government took the mojahedin side, based in the refugee camps of Peshawar and the North-west Frontier Province.

Najibullah ran the secret police, a job that involved cruelty and killing. The regime controlled the cities and could pass along the main roads. The mojahedin moved at will in the mountains south and east of Kabul but never seized a major town.

For five years the war was stalemated, then Mr Gorbachev decided withdrawal was the best option. The KGB thought that, as a Pashtun, Najibullah would have a better chance of managing the retreat and keeping a pro-Moscow regime in power than Babrak Karmal, who had been installed when the tanks first arrived.

Thus did Moscow back Najibullah's 1986 takeover. He gradually reversed the reforms of 1978 and sought to broaden the regime's base by re-emphasising Islamic and nationalist symbols. It was an uphill struggle because of the easy propaganda target of Soviet atheism. But by February 1989, when the last Soviet troops pulled out, Najibullah had done a remarkable job of consolidating support, helped partly by the mojahedin's fanatical posturing, which scared Kabul's urban middle class.

The US and most of the diplomatic community did not understand Najibullah's support base. "Once the Soviet protectors are gone, the regime's early demise will be inevitable," Robert Peck, the US negotiator, told Congress. Mr Gorbachev also thought Najibullah was doomed. Unusually, it was the KGB chief, Vladimir Kryuchkov, and foreign minister, Eduard Shevardnadze, who forged an alliance behind Najibullah in the pro-withdrawal period, believing it would leave a poor signal if the Soviet Union abandoned its friends. At home Najibullah played the nationalist card, making a virtue of necessity once the Soviet withdrawal was inevitable. He described the Soviet presence as a diktat he had got rid of.



Najibullah kept the Afghan capital, Kabul, free of war

He survived three more years in power, finally falling after General Abdul Rashid Dostam, a key army commander in northern Afghanistan, made a deal with Ahmed Shah Massoud, a Tajik and the mojahedin's best commander. By then Najibullah was negotiating with the United Nations for a peace deal with the mojahedin under which he would resign in exchange for a broad-based new government. The deal was never finalised, largely because Najibullah was persuaded by Benon Savan, the UN envoy, to leave power before the other side had accepted its side of the bargain.

Everything unravelled. Najibullah fled to the UN compound and the mojahedin entered Kabul with barely a shot being fired. But their internal tensions had always been greater than those within the PDPA; they soon turned on each other.

Kabul became the target of artillery and rocket fire. Refugees were sent scattering. Food became scarce. The water system collapsed. Safe within the UN compound until last week, Najibullah could hear the roar of war but not see the devastation that had followed in his wake.

Jonathan Steele

Mohammed Najibullah, politician, born 1947; died September 27, 1996

Shot IRA suspect was unarmed

Chris Elliott and Owen Bowcott

DIARMUID O'NEILL, the 27-year-old IRA suspect, was shot dead through a gap in the doorway of a first-floor flat in west London by police officers who believed he was making a threatening movement.

As an inquest into his death — which marks the first time an IRA suspect has been shot dead on the mainland — was opened and adjourned last week, more details of the events leading up to the shooting emerged. The unarmed man was shot six times by two officers from Scotland Yard's tactical firearms group, SO19.

The policemen, armed with Heckler and Koch submachine guns, fired from inside the building as they crouched in the hallway outside the flat in a house at Glenthorne Road, Hammersmith.

Only evidence of identification was released during the 20-minute hearing at Hammersmith coroner's court. The official investigation into the death is being supervised by the Police Complaints Authority, which is understood to be concentrating on a stand-off between the dead man and armed officers who were outside his door as teargas was fired through a window.

The authority wants to establish how long the stand-off lasted and whether trained negotiators would have been called in. Having been warned that O'Neill might be armed, the officers have said they shot him six times through a partly opened door because, in spite of their demands, they could not see his hands.

Republican sources in Belfast alleged he was shot as he answered the front door.

The shooting took place during early morning raids in west London and Crawley, West Sussex. In a further raid on a warehouse in Hornsey, north London, police recovered a record haul of 10 tonnes of home-made explosives, 1kg of Semtex, bomb-making equipment, guns and ammunition.

Intelligence sources in London insist that O'Neill's links with the republican movement had been well established over the past five years. They also claim that he had been under surveillance for weeks in connection with the Hornsey arms cache before they moved in.

O'Neill was brought up in an Irish family that had moved to London, and was educated at the London Oratory school in Knightsbidge, where Labour leader Tony Blair has sent his son. He worked as a cabinet-maker before joining the Bank of Ireland's branch in Shepherd's Bush, west London, as a clerk.

In June 1989, he was convicted on three counts of defrauding his employers of £75,000. Sentenced to 12 months' detention in a young offenders' institution, he served five. At his trial, it emerged that police suspected that £34,000 of the money had been channelled to the IRA.

On Monday four men appeared in court charged with terrorist offences following last week's raids. The four — Brian McHugh, aged 30, unemployed; Patrick Kelly, also 30, unemployed; James Murphy, 25, a school groundsman; and Michael Phillips, 24, a British Airways apprentice engineer — were remanded in custody at Belmarsh Courts, south London. They will appear again on October 9.

A fifth man — Shane O'Neill, aged 23, the dead man's brother — had been released on bail the previous Friday.

● The Loyalist ceasefire in Northern Ireland was in the balance on Monday night after more than 100 Maze prisoners withdrew support for the peace process. According to John White, prisons spokesman for the Ulster Defence Association, inmates believe the Stormont all-party talks are going nowhere and that the IRA is using paramilitary action as a tactic alongside the peace process.



GERRY ADAMS allowed himself a little smile last week. He had been asked about literary influences. After listing Irish writers such as Liam O'Flaherty and Roddy Doyle, he threw in a surprise, the creator of Jeeves and Bertie Wooster, epitomes of the English class system, *writes Ewen MacAskill*.

A bemused journalist asked why one of the key figures in the republican movement had chosen P G Wodehouse. Mr Adams said it was because he identified with the oppressed, even butlers.

"I always treat butlers with absolute deference," he said. "I think they are long suffering." He did not add "like the Irish people" but did say "like representatives of Sinn Fein".

Adams was in the Irish Centre in Camden, north London, for what should have been a low-key event for the launch of his autobiography, Before The Dawn. Instead, the master of public relations was happy to be feted by more than 100 television cameramen, photographers and reporters, drawn by the IRA arms find earlier in the week.

PHOTOGRAPH: SEAN SMITH

Lung cancer victims sue tobacco firms

Clare Dyer and Lisa Buckingham

FORTY lung cancer victims are to sue cigarette manufacturers Imperial Tobacco and Gallahers for millions of pounds in the first mass action by smokers in Britain's courts.

Lawyers will take the case on a "no win, no fee" basis — £3 million worth of work will go unpaid if they lose. The case looked set to be abandoned after a year of investigation when the Legal Aid Board refused funding to take it to court last July.

But London solicitors Leigh, Day & Co have agreed to take it on under a conditional fee agreement together with Daniel Brennan QC, president of the Personal Injury Bar Association, and Mark Mildred, a professor at Nottingham Law School and an expert on group actions. The case is the first group action to be run on such a basis. Such deals, introduced a year ago, are seen by many solicitors as too risky for big cases, and are mainly used for one-off accident claims.

In the United States, despite years of litigation, no tobacco manufacturer has yet paid a penny in compensation. Law firms there have been bankrupted after trying to take on the tobacco giants. Now, 60 law firms and several state governments looking to recoup billions of dollars spent on smoking-related illnesses have formed a powerful alliance.

Imperial and Gallahers together account for 80 per cent of the UK market. The British cancer victims have been warned that the manufacturers could pursue them for their legal costs if the case is unsuccessful, but have decided to press ahead.

Martyn Day, a senior partner in Leigh, Day & Co, said: "The only way for the victims to gain access to justice in the British courts was for lawyers to take on the cases through the no win, no fee scheme."

The lawyers will argue that manufacturers knew the risks of tar in 1960 and should have reduced it in their products.

Widow fights for baby by dead husband

Clare Dyer

A YOUNG widow is battling for the right to conceive a baby using sperm from her dead husband, in the first case of its kind in Britain.

Her attempt to bear the child her husband wanted is being blocked by the Human Fertilisation and Embryology Authority (HFEA), which insists that the law requires his consent in writing. The sperm was taken from the 30-year-old man while he was in a coma on a life support machine. His widow, who has obtained a court order guaranteeing anonymity, is taking her legal action to the High Court in London.

Identified only by her initials, DB, she has had to take out a second mortgage on her house to finance the case, which could cost her more than £80,000 if she loses.

The couple, from the Midlands, married in 1991 after a nine-year relationship. They began trying for a baby in January 1995 but two months later Mr B, a manager with a home improvement firm, contracted bacterial meningitis. He went into a coma and was pronounced brain dead four days later. At the request of Mrs B, who is now aged 30, doctors at Hallamshire hospital in Sheffield agreed to take samples of sperm from her husband before switching off the life support machine. He was clinically dead when the second sample was taken.

Several months before, she says, she and her husband had read a magazine article about a widow impregnated by her dead husband's sperm. "We agreed that if we were ever in that situation, that's what we'd like to do," she said.

The preserved samples have lain in storage for the past 18 months at Jessop's Hospital, Sheffield, while the HFEA and Mrs B's lawyers argued over her right to be inseminated with them. Mrs B wants to be treated in Britain, or to have the samples exported abroad. Doctors in Belgium and the US have agreed to carry out the procedure.

The HFEA says it would be unlawful to use them in Britain without written consent, and will not export them abroad for a purpose for which they could not be used here.

Mrs B, who runs a small business, has already run up more than £50,000 in legal bills with a City of London solicitors' firm before switching firms.

"Had I been pregnant when my husband died and I'd turned round to everybody and said 'I don't want a baby now I haven't got a husband, I'm getting an abortion', that would have been fine. My husband's wishes wouldn't have counted. But not the other way around."

The case is expected to be heard by Sir Stephen Brown, president of the High Court's Family Division and England's senior family judge. Lord Lester, Mrs B's QC, will argue that the requirement for consent applies only where sperm comes from a third party, not from the woman's husband.

Under the Human Fertilisation and Embryology Act, 1990, which regulates artificial insemination, written consent is not needed where a couple are treated "together". Lord Lester will contend that this includes cases where a husband's sperm is used after his death to inseminate his wife.

Police back strict sentencing

Alan Travis

MICHAEL HOWARD has admitted that opposition from senior judges and the House of Lords to his US-style law and order package meant "it will be very difficult" to get it on to the statute book before the election.

The Home Secretary said his flagship bill was in peril because the parliamentary session must end in May, the last date John Major can call a general election. His admission came at the annual conference of the Police Superintendents' Association in Stratford-upon-Avon as its president attacked "so-called progressive university-educated chief constables" who were "lining up with the judges" to oppose the new package. Chief Superintendent Brian MacKenzie said his members would not alter their position. Police superintendents supported Mr Howard.

The Home Secretary's proposals include introducing mandatory minimum three-year sentences for repeat burglars and a seven-year minimum for serious drug dealers. Repeat serious violent and sexual criminals face "two strikes and you're out" life sentences. The bill detailing the package is due to be published after the Queen's Speech in November.

The measures came under attack in the House of Lords in May, when the then Lord Chief Justice, Lord Taylor, initiated a special debate to draw attention to what he described as their grave consequences.

Lord Taylor was supported by four former Conservative Home Office ministers when he warned that "never in the history of the criminal law have such far-reaching proposals been put forward on the strength of such flimsy and dubious evidence".

Mr Howard acknowledged the scale of the opposition he faced in Parliament, and used Mr MacKenzie's assertion that the measures were needed in the national interest.

The introduction of a Europe-wide register of paedophiles is also under consideration, Mr Howard said.

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In Brief

A RECORD 23.7 million overseas visitors came to "exciting, stylish and fashionable" Britain last year, spending nearly £12 billion, the British Tourist Authority said.

THE National Health Service has become the leading provider of private health care because of the rapid growth of paybeds in trust hospitals, according to the authoritative Fitzhugh Directory of Independent Healthcare and Long-term Care.

MANDY ALLWOOD has lost three of the eight foetuses she was carrying. A consultant at King's College hospital, London, where she was taken, say it is highly unlikely that any of the remaining foetuses would be born alive and well.

PETER GODWIN has won the £10,000 Esquire Apple Waterstone's non-fiction award for his memoir, Mukiwa. The book relates the author's experience of growing up in Rhodesia during the 1960s and 1970s.

TWO prison governors, David Godfrey of Ford open prison in West Sussex, and David Sherwood of Highpoint in Suffolk, resigned and made unprecedented attacks on politicians and management. Mr Godfrey said jails were "on the brink of catastrophe".

EXPLORER Sir Ranulph Fiennes is to attempt to become the first man to cross Antarctica solo and unsupported. All he will have for company will be a 500lb sled.

LAWYERS representing the Duchess of York are considering legal action to halt further publication in tabloid newspapers of taped conversations in which she reveals personal details about her sex life, financial problems and her views on the royal family.

ALLEGATIONS that police used the home of Fred and Rosemary West as a brothel and drinking club have been dismissed by the Police Complaints Authority after a seven-month investigation.

PREGNANCIES among under-16s have started to increase again, according to figures released by the Office for National Statistics, throwing doubt on the chances of achieving the Government's target of halving the rate by the turn of the century. Statisticians also said that the marriage rate had dropped by more than half since 1971.

TELEVISION presenter Leslie Crowther, former host of shows ranging from Crackerjack to The Price Is Right, has died at the age of 63.

James Lewis is on holiday

Labour heralds 10p starting tax rate

Ewen MacAskill and Alex Brummer in Washington

LABOUR promised on Monday to reverse any move by the Chancellor, Kenneth Clarke, to abolish inheritance and capital gains taxes in next month's Budget.

The £4.5 billion this would bring in could, in principle, be used to create a 10p starting rate for income tax, a Labour source said.

The shadow chancellor, Gordon Brown, told the Labour party conference in Blackpool that the emphasis should not be on millionaires' taxes but on cutting the starting rate of tax to 15p or 10p for the lowest paid.

Mr Clarke is under pressure from the Prime Minister to cut inheritance and capital gains taxes.

Mr Brown said: "My tax-cutting ambition is to lower the starting rate of tax to 15p or even 10p, to help everyone. So while the Tories want a millionaires' tax cut for themselves, I want a people's tax cut for jobs."

He argued for a need to overhaul the benefits system as well as tax to encourage people to work. Labour estimates that restoration of inheritance tax would bring in £3 billion and capital gains £1.5 billion.

Conservative Central Office responded by disputing the figures, describing Mr Brown as "the incredible shrinking Chancellor". If the starting rate of tax was reduced from 20p to 10p, the cost would be £8.7 billion, and £4.3 billion at 15p, it claimed.

While Labour tactics for dealing with abolition of inheritance and capital gains tax are relatively clear, Mr Brown will face a dilemma if Mr Clarke opts next month to cut income tax.

Apart from tax, the main message from Mr Brown was to reiterate his determination to keep the lid on public spending, saying he will maintain "iron discipline".

"Costed, hard-headed, radical policies for stability, employment, educational opportunity and industry, and there is no other way.

"No magic-wand solutions by cooking the books, or juggling the figures. There is no alternative strategy that will achieve Labour's goals. No retreat into one-nation isolationism. No unsustainable dashes for growth. No wish-list spending solutions, as surely as there are no answers in monetarist mantras and crude free-market slogans."

This, as well as sections dealing with child benefits reform and the minimum wage, underlined how far Mr Brown has moved the agenda since being appointed shadow chancellor by John Smith in 1992.

Meanwhile in Washington at the weekend Mr Clarke brushed aside backbench demands for a giveaway election Budget, insisting that the Tories' re-election hopes rested on the sound management of a growing economy.

In a candid admission, Mr Clarke had earlier said that the Government had failed to deliver the tax cuts it promised before the 1992 election. He said voters would remember the Tories had promised tax reductions four years ago, and had failed to deliver. "Frothy tax cuts won't win a vote," he told GMTV's Sunday programme.

Speaking after a meeting of the IMF's policy-making group, Mr Clarke said: "A government that intends to win an election does not create problems for itself by behaving foolishly a few months before."

Mr Clarke also seized the opportunity to scoff at those demanding his resignation because of his pro-euro sympathies. He said it would be absurd for a British Chancellor to exclude himself from discussion on a single currency.

Caught in a web of greed and deceit

David Leigh

THE secret money that Neil Hamilton took as a backbencher was of two kinds: cash in envelopes from Mohamed Al Fayed, the owner of Harrods, and "commissions" from the lobbyist Ian Greer. The sums added up to tens of thousands of pounds.

But when the then Department of Trade and Industry minister was under investigation in 1994 by the Deputy Prime Minister, Michael Heseltine, and the Cabinet Secretary, Sir Robin Butler, he lied about these financial relationships.

Staff at the Park Lane offices of Mr Al Fayed say they remember Neil Hamilton. "Mr Hamilton came to Park Lane quite often to see Mr Al Fayed," one says, "usually about once every four to six weeks." He would phone, too, in the period around 1987, asking whether his envelopes were ready.

One of those envelopes was prepared by Mr Al Fayed in 1987 shortly before a free trip to the Ritz Hotel in Paris, which the tycoon had arranged for Mr Hamilton and his wife. It contained more than £2,000 and was left at the reception desk at Park Lane. Mr Al Fayed's staff have signed witness statements describing how Mr Hamilton collected these envelopes.

Envelopes containing cash went also to Mr Greer, say the Harrods camp — he was collecting £5,000 in cash per quarter on top of the £25,000 a year which Ian Greer Associates Ltd was invoicing Harrods for the lobbying account.

The purpose of the payments was to encourage Mr Hamilton to give parliamentary help to Mr Al Fayed in his long-running war with rival tycoon Tiny Rowland of Lonrho.

As well as the money and free trips that Mr Al Fayed could be persuaded to give him directly, the MP also took secret payments from Mr Greer. He had narrowly escaped exposure for this during an inquiry by the parliamentary privileges committee in 1989.

But the truth was bound finally to come out if Mr Hamilton's libel action, which he abandoned on Monday, had gone ahead this week.

A covert financial relationship between the two men went back a long way. In 1984, the Conservative MP had been campaigning in Parliament to retain lead in petrol on behalf of the company which made the lead additive, Associated Octel. The firm had some workers in Mr Hamilton's Tatton constituency in Cheshire. But the firm was also paying Mr Greer to lobby for them.

Neil Hamilton: the MP received bundles of cash in envelopes

At the time, Mr Hamilton denied indignantly that cash from Mr Greer was involved. "I have never received a penny piece from the company," he said. "My interest is solely to try and save jobs for my constituents." Mr Greer said equally sanctimoniously in a TV interview: "We don't pay Members of Parliament."

But Mr Greer had already paid one Labour MP, Walter Johnson, for help in the Associated Octel campaign. The following year, he was to start paying MPs again when he was hired to lobby for British Airways, which was fighting plans to cut its monopoly on some routes.

Mr Greer started giving money in 1985 to Tory MP Sir Michael Grylls, who had proposed to the BA chairman, Lord King, that Ian Greer Associates be hired as lobbyists.

Mr Greer was later to admit to an MPs' committee that he had made payments to certain MPs. But although Sir Michael Grylls's name was confirmed, the identity of a second MP who had been getting money remained a secret. Mr Greer refused to identify him other than as MP "B".

Mr Hamilton placed his first foot on the ministerial ladder immediately after that report came out. At the end of July 1990, Mr Hamilton was promoted by Margaret Thatcher to become a government whip. He was further promoted by John Major to become corporate affairs minister.

A witness for the Guardian has now given a statement that Mr Hamilton received commission payments from Mr Greer at the relevant dates. It has thus come to light that MP "B" was Mr Hamilton.

On Mr Greer's own admissions in 1990, the MP had first started receiving money in 1986. He had deliberately never declared his financial relationship with Ian Greer on the Register of Members Interests. Nor did he declare it to ministers when lobbying on behalf of Mr Greer's clients.

Nor did Mr Hamilton truthfully disclose the financial relationship with Mr Greer during the official investigation into his conduct after the Guardian article of October 1994 which first revealed he was getting cash for questions.

A prime ministerial announcement by Mr Major to the House at the time detailed the account Mr Hamilton gave of his financial dealings. It is clear from that statement that no acknowledgment was made by Mr Hamilton during the inquiry of his financial link with Mr Greer.

Mr Hamilton therefore deceived his departmental boss, the Deputy Prime Minister, Michael Heseltine. He also deceived the Prime Minister, the Chief Whip, Richard Ryder, and the Cabinet Secretary, Sir Robin Butler.

The accounts, bills and cancelled cheques of Ian Greer Associates for the years from 1986, together with Mr Hamilton's bank accounts and tax returns, will tell the story of the payments MP "B" received, and the form in which they came.

Government records held by Sir Robin and those of Mr Major's principal private secretary, Alex Allan, will reveal how Mr Hamilton did not tell the truth in 1994 when he came under investigation.

These documents are in the hands of Mr Hamilton and his lawyers. They would have been produced in open court at the trial — if it had taken place.

Wodehouse a 'silly ass'

Richard Norton-Taylor

P G WODEHOUSE, creator of Jeeves and Bertie Wooster, was a "silly ass" with no political sense, whose broadcasts to the United States from Germany during the second world war were the actions of a vain and selfish man rather than a traitor, as his detractors claimed.

This judgment by a Home Office official was revealed this week when secret documents, including voluminous MI5 files, were released at the Public Record Office. The records show how the most English of comic writers was a huge embarrassment to the government desperate to prevent him returning to his native land. However, they also reveal that Wodehouse and his wife, Ethel, received substantial payments from the Germans during the war.

"Although I imagine his political intelligence and perhaps his knowledge of opinion in this country is very limited, I should think he must know enough to be aware that his position here will be to say the least unpleasant," an exasperated Home Office official told the Home Secretary, Herbert Morrison, in 1943.

The official added: "I agree with the view that PGW is a person without political sense. He was a 'silly ass' and a 'selfish ass' to broadcast, but there seems no point in trying to charge such an ass with treason."

The picaresque saga began in Le Touquet in May 1940 when Plum, as Wodehouse was known, and his wife, Ethel, were arrested by the Germans.

Wodehouse was sent to a camp in Upper Silesia — which provided the material for his essentially whimsical broadcasts — before he and his wife were put up at the Hotel Adlon in Berlin. Subsequently they moved to the opulent Hotel Bristol in Paris.

Wodehouse was knighted by Harold Wilson in 1975, and died a month later, aged 94.



GUARDIAN WEEKLY
October 6 1996

Stalking case provokes fury

Stuart Millar and Clare Dyer

PRESSURE for an immediate change in the law on stalking intensified last week when a judge called for it to be made a criminal offence after the conviction of an unemployed man who terrified a dental nurse for eight months.

Perry Southall, aged 20, from east London, was forced to endure 200 incidents of harassment by Clarence Morris, a convicted rapist aged 37. Although he never laid a finger on her, Morris was found guilty on two assault charges.

There was outrage at Southwark crown court when Morris's barrister, David Stanton, in effect accused Miss Southall of provoking her eight-month ordeal by her appearance. His conduct was referred to the Bar Council.

Judge Gerald Butler, QC, adjourning sentence for a month for medical reports, warned Morris, with 45 previous convictions for sexual offences and assault, that he was considering sending him indefinitely to Rampton high security mental hospital.

On the day the case ended the Home Secretary, Michael Howard, appeared to signal action by the Government when he told the annual conference of the Police Superintendents' Association of England and Wales that legislation to outlaw stalking could be introduced before the general election.

The jury took less than two hours to decide that Morris, a six-footer who has spent 15 years in prison, had psychologically scarred Miss Southall to such an extent that it was the equivalent of physical injury.

Judge Butler said: "What this case clearly shows is that the legislature must move swiftly to create a separate offence for this kind of conduct."

A conviction was possible only because prosecutors decided two years ago that, in the absence of an anti-stalking law, they would charge stalkers with causing actual or grievous bodily harm. The offences were intended to deal with physical assaults, but prosecutors argued they could cover psychological harm.

Julie Bindel, of the International Conference on Violence, Abuse and Women's Citizenship, said: "This case, like many others, shows how crucial a change in the law is. It is high time that such a serious offence is placed firmly in the criminal arena."

The row over Mr Stanton's remarks during his closing speech threatened to overshadow the judge's recommendation. He told the jury of six men and six women: "Miss Southall chooses to make herself to look, no doubt, as attractive as possible. She chooses to do that not only for her own satisfaction but because she likes the attention of others: men."

Mr Stanton, who likened Miss Southall to Pamela Anderson, whom he described as "a sexually active actress", suggested it was Morris's right to find her attractive.

"Is it fair that a young lady who dresses to attract, the queen bee attracting the drones, the queen bee that dresses to kill . . . cries foul because somebody finds her attractive?"

Judge Butler criticised the remarks in court. "May I publicly and entirely dissociate myself from your comments as to that which I believe ought never to have been made." He stopped short of referring him to the Bar Council.



Perry Southall . . . suffered 200 incidents of harassment

Ex-WPC was asked to be 'peace' spy

Owen Bowcott

SPECIAL Branch officers offered a former policewoman £200 a month plus expenses for informing on friends in the direct action peace group Ploughshares, it was disclosed last week.

Extra payments to cover childminding fees, bonuses for top-grade information and immunity from prosecution were also promised to Janet Lovelace, a mother with three young children.

The attempt by two detectives to recruit Ms Lovelace, aged 39, is the latest example of police surveillance of anti-war and environmental campaigners. Lancashire police described the approach as "not unusual".

The Ploughshares movement, which stems from Catholic pacifist actions in the United States at the time of the Vietnam war, has been a focus of police interest.

This summer four women protesters were acquitted of causing £1.5 million damage to a British Aerospace Hawk jet at the company's Warton factory in Lancashire.

They admitted attacking the plane with hammers in protest at the sale of Hawks to the Indonesian government, which has allegedly used them against civilians in East Timor.

Ms Lovelace, a constable in Hampshire for five years, is separated from her policeman husband. She said: "The detectives told me, 'Once a copper always a copper.' But I'd left the force because of that type of attitude.

"They came to my house and said they wanted me to be a spy for them, to infiltrate the Ploughshares movement and report back on people's names. They said they were simply concerned about public order."

When they met for the second time, at a public house near the BAe site in Warton, the two men tried to persuade her that if BAe's exports were disrupted, local people would lose their jobs. "I replied that if BAe continued, lives would be lost in East Timor.

"They offered me £200 a month plus any expenses and a bonus, if I came up with good information. They wanted names and anyone who is doing the organising."

The list of inducements grew longer and longer. Eventually, Ms Lovelace told them she was not interested. "I'm not going to do it. I just want to expose what's going on."

At first, British Aerospace at Warton denied knowledge of the incident. But a police spokesman said: "A Lancashire constabulary officer did speak to the woman in question. It's part of ongoing efforts to ensure the force plays an effective role in preventing criminal offences being committed at BAe's Warton site.

"This sort of inquiry is not unusual. Indeed she is one of several people who have been approached."

Angie Zelter, one of the four women acquitted of the attack on the Hawk, claimed a friend of hers had recently been approached. "The man said he was from MI5 and asked her if she would infiltrate Ploughshares. This is all a waste of taxpayers' money. Everything we do is completely open."

Gene hope for HIV drug

Tim Radford

AMERICAN scientists believe they have discovered the genetic factors that might confer resistance to the HIV virus.

A team led by Stephen O'Brien of the National Cancer Institute in Bethesda, Maryland, reported last week that they have found a gene mutation that seems to explain why some people at high risk from the virus do not get infected, and also why other people who do become infected live for many years without developing Aids.

HIV is a retrovirus: it cannot replicate unless it can smuggle itself into an immune system cell and hijack the victim's DNA to do its work for it. Once it can replicate, the virus mutates, making it ultimately invulnerable to treatment.

But now researchers have studied a group of 1,900 volunteers at high risk of infection and found a mutation in the gene for CKR5 in some of them. Everyone inherits two copies of a gene, one from each parent. People with two mutant copies of the gene were, they report, highly resistant to HIV infection. And people with one mutant copy progressed towards Aids more slowly than those without either mutation.

World service to shed 90 staff

Andrew Culf

NINETY jobs are to be axed at the crisis-torn BBC World Service in a £6.5 million economy drive, it was announced last week.

The cuts coincided with a warning from its managing director, Sam Younger, that foreign language services would have to close next year unless the Government makes up a £5 million funding shortfall in November's Budget.

The economies represent 5 per cent of the service's £135.6 million operating budget, provided as grant-in-aid from the Foreign Office.

Mr Younger said: "Recognising the tight situation for funding across the whole public sector, we have done everything we can to cut costs while protecting services for listeners."

He hoped the Government would acknowledge what had been achieved and would look again at its figures for next year's grant-in-aid.

The most vulnerable foreign language services include sub-Saharan Africa, central Europe and Brazil.

The service's funding crisis is separate from the divisive row over director general John Birt's plans to merge its news and English language departments with the BBC's domestic radio and television.

Beef cull delays leave farmer in limbo

Paul Brown

SAM JOHNSON has 100 cattle he would rather had been slaughtered months ago, but he has to keep on feeding them because he cannot find an abattoir which will take them.

As the grass stops growing this autumn the now useless dairy cows and unsaleable beef cattle will begin to eat their way through his silage and corn which was intended to keep his 500 head of productive livestock alive through the winter. It costs £10-£14 a week to keep a cow in fodder during the winter, so he faces a loss of £1,000 a week — money he needs to keep his Wiltshire farm afloat.

He is one of an increasing band of farmers bewildered and financially battered by the Government's much criticised culling scheme, agreed with Britain's European Union partners to calm fears over the spread of mad cow disease. The Government finally admitted last week that there was a backlog of 340,000 cattle for slaughter.

Among farmers who never seem to reach the top of the waiting list there is talk of skulduggery, backhanders and queue-jumping. The Intervention Board, which runs the scheme for the Government, says there are no rules and that market forces prevail. Abattoirs can choose whom they like to bring their cattle for slaughter. All receive the same live-weight payment of 83p a kilo.

Mr Johnson, of Stokes Marsh Farm at Coulston, has been on the waiting list of herds for slaughter since March 20, when the ban on the sale of cattle over 30 months old was imposed. "I never seem to get to the top of the list. I am not allowed to kill them myself and put them in a pit of lime like in the days of foot and mouth [disease]. My only outlet is the slaughterhouse, and I cannot get anyone to take them."

Meanwhile dissatisfaction with the Government's handling of the BSE crisis led to a call for a public inquiry by Bob Stevenson, the president of the British Veterinary Association.

Mr Stevenson's outspoken attack as leader of the country's normally uncomplaining 9,000 vets came on the opening day of the association's annual meeting in Chester last week.

There was more bad news when Scotland's biggest cattle market company, Aberdeen and Northern Marts, took legal action against Michael Forsyth, the Scottish Secretary, accusing him of mishandling the crisis. It lodged an action at the Court of Session in Edinburgh seeking a judicial review. It is to be considered by a Court of Session judge on October 8.

● American scientists said last week they had devised a test to identify BSE and its human parallel, Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease (CJD), *writes Tim Radford*.

The scientists from the California Institute of Technology and the US National Institute of Neurological Disorders in Maryland reported in the latest issue of the New England Journal of Medicine that a telltale protein in the spinal fluid would confirm the sufferer had one of a group of neurological disorders that includes BSE and CJD.



Bleak future . . . Wiltshire farmer Sam Johnson PHOTO: DARREN JACK

GUARDIAN WEEKLY
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Lepage's epic voyage

Is an eight-hour play worth the time and effort of sitting through? Definitely, says **Michael Billington**

THEATRE seems to be going in two directions: either to short, intense experiences like Pinter's Ashes To Ashes; or towards vast epics like Robert Lepage's The Seven Streams Of The River Ota, which runs close to eight hours. I should say at once that the show at London's Lyttelton theatre is far more coherent than the workshop version seen at Edinburgh two years ago. It has many passages of striking visual beauty and intelligence. Yet at the end I was left with the nagging feeling that the show's epic form is not wholly justified by its actual content.

The show, conceived by Lepage and collectively written by its actors, began with the set: a wooden rectangle that becomes the veranda of a house in Hiroshima, a New York apartment in the sixties, an Amsterdam flat where a victim of Aids experiences an assisted death, an Osaka theatre playing Feydeau, the death-camp at Theresienstadt in 1943.

The story itself works through a series of East-West personal relationships played out against the backdrop of modern history: the nuclear bomb, the Holocaust, Aids. It begins in 1945 with a replay of Madama Butterfly — itself set near Nagasaki — in which an American GI photographer has a brief affair with a modern Cio-Cio-San. Twenty years later, the product of their union finds himself living in the same New York apartment as his American half-brother. You may blench at the coincidence but you have to admire the wit with which Lepage evokes Greenwich Village life: private lives are seen through a Rear Window-like perspective, the shared bathroom becomes as crowded as the cabin scene in A Night At The Opera.

Robert Lepage . . . the parts are better than the whole

Time and again one is impressed by individual scenes. Theresienstadt is evoked through a hall of mirrors which later turns into a stage where a young Czech-Jewish girl, Jana Capek, becomes part of an illusionist's disappearing act later used as the cover for her escape. Fifty years on, Jana is a Zen student living in a monastery above Hiroshima and being interviewed by a devastatingly patronising French-Canadian TV star who, in the final cut, imposes an image of the A-bomb on Jana's shaven head.

The show is both socially observant and strangely beautiful. But what is being said? That Hiroshima has undergone an astonishing renewal, so out of death may come life. That East and West, while divided by custom and tradition, offer complex mirror-images of each other. That sexuality, in spite of Aids, remains an ungovernable life force.

Behind the show lies an affirmative, humanist instinct. But Lepage often uses arbitrary plotting devices to prove the point, not merely the coincidental collision of the two brothers but the fact that the male offspring of a Montreal actress and a blinded Hiroshima victim suddenly decide to sleep together. More seriously, there is a whiff of cultural colonialism about the idea that the show is about Westerners who come to Hiroshima to find themselves "confronted with their own devastation and their own enlightenment". The more we know about Hiroshima the better; but the idea that, having first destroyed it, we should then use it as spiritual salvation sticks in the throat.

In the end, the parts are better than the whole: individual scenes are breathtaking, but the total gesture is shaky. I would, however, not wish to deter anyone from seeing it. The show's ideas may not sustain its epic length, but the journey itself has many and varied rewards.

Whiteread's world of interiors

ART
Adrian Searle

RACHEL WHITEREAD'S sculpture deals with things close to hand: the house, the room, the stair and the floor. Tables, baths, sinks, closets and mattresses; the bookshelf and the mortuary slab. Her works are death masks of the solid world.

Walking into her exhibition at the Tate Gallery Liverpool, one might think that Whiteread's work is concerned only with solidity, the mass and volume of familiar objects in the physical world. Yet it is necessary to remind ourselves that what faces us are not simple re-cast versions of baths and beds and chairs, the timeless furnishings of the ordinary life, but the spaces around and within these things. We are confronted with displaced volumes, the traces of objects which have disappeared, hidden emptiness made both visible and tangible.

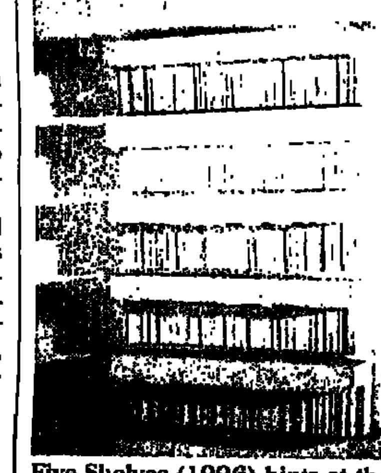
This survey of Whiteread's work from 1988 to the present is necessarily incomplete, and the sculptures on which her public fame largely rests are absent. Her magnificent House, the cast of the space inside a middle terrace council house in London's East End, was destroyed in 1994 by an intransigent Tower Hamlets Council after a lengthy public debate. And Ghost — her 1990 plaster cast of the space inside a Victorian living-room — is too large for the Liverpool Tate's low-ceilinged upper-floor gallery.

What the exhibition does instead is to allow us to trace Whiteread's technical, formal and poetic development across a range of medium-sized works, from her 1988 plaster cast of the interior of a simple closet, covered in black felt, to her most recent plaster, resin and rubber casts, culminating in a maquette for a memorial in Vienna to the Austrian Jews who died in the Holocaust. A recent cast of the space between rows of books on shelves and the wall behind, gives us an idea of the squat, inside-out library building she is constructing in Vienna.

One of the problems facing an artist who has success early on is that further developments have to be conducted in the public gaze. Artists have to be allowed to go up blind alleys, to falter and pause. It is clear that Whiteread, encumbered by an enormous reputation, is striking not only because of the single-mindedness of her theme, but also on account of the richness of her sculptural language.

The show is filled with ghostly familiars, the traces of a vocabulary of silences. The tomb-like, raised casts of the spaces surrounding cast-iron bathtubs. The sink with its wastepipe, like a hollow oesophagus descending into enclosed darkness. The desk with its single wooden drawer mired in plaster. The rubber bed-base not so much displayed as abandoned. The dark, icily translucent resin cast of the space under the floorboards, laid out before a window with a magnificent view across the Mersey. With each fresh encounter one is struck by both the familiarity of the objects she has worked with and by their strangeness, their mute authority.

Her work retains its power and its presence after many viewings. She recognises that art is neither decoration nor commodity, and her work does what art, at its best, has always done: it makes us see the world afresh. The fact that the world she is scrutinising is the most familiar of all makes her sculpture all the more impressive. We become re-attuned to what we know so well that we have come to disregard. Coming out of the Tate, and glancing up at the Mersey Docks and Harbour Board Building, this huge edifice suddenly looks like the space under someone's chair.



Five Shelves (1996) hints at the library Whiteread is constructing

Heritage Pictures Inc

CINEMA
Derek Malcolm

LAST WEEK, Jane Austen's Emma. This week, Charlotte Brontë's Jane Eyre. Next week, Thomas Hardy's Jude. We'll soon have to wear bonnets to the cinema.

But let's not be too cynical about heritage. Franco Zeffirelli's adaptation of Jane Eyre is by no means a failure. It is, in fact, very much like his version of Hamlet — filleted in a way which thins the flesh on its bones and loses quite a lot of blood but in the end proves that even half the story is pretty impressive.

The problem with doing this is that it tends to turn Charlotte Brontë into a writer of melodrama. That this is generally resisted here is a point in favour of Zeffirelli, and his adaptor Hugh Whitemore, though the sudden first sighting of a wild-eyed Billie Whitelaw as Grace Poole, mad Bertha Rochester's keeper, was enough to cause a distinct titter at the press show.

Otherwise, we have in Charlotte Gainsbourg a readily believable pale Jane, and in William Hurt a Rochester whose introspection is appropriately mysterious. It could be said that there isn't enough of an erotic charge to the film, since neither player can manage to suggest that they are ever doing more than gently pining for each other.

This is possibly because the religious element in the book is virtually ignored, except for the early scenes at the Lowood Institution, and there's nothing like a bit of guilt to encourage the libido, as various bishops have recently discovered.

It's also because, though Zeffirelli's direction is remarkably efficient throughout, it never manages to seem passionately involved. Perhaps, if it were, we might have got something worse.

Zeffirelli traverses the main plot perfectly well but lets the story speak for itself. David Watkin is the cinematographer and he makes no attempt to prettify things, while Roger Hall's production design is detailed and accurate to the period.

All this loads a lot on to the cast, and both Anna Paquin (Jane as a girl) and Gainsbourg could do little more than they manage by way of conviction. Gainsbourg looks wonderful, suggesting both the plain Jane and the beautiful, independently-minded woman lying just below the surface.

Hurt is a bit more of a problem, although his English accent is impeccable and he is clearly struggling not to make Rochester into a dry run for Heathcliff. The subtlety is not really there in the screenplay.

What you will see is surprisingly straightforward considering the director, and that does have its benefits. Those who have never read the book will probably enjoy it greatly. Those who have may find the film's simplicity less of a virtue and may miss Jane's narration in her own subtle words. Sometimes they're used, but not many of them.

Today Brum, tomorrow the world

WHO HE? may have been the reaction of all but the most erudite of British concert goers, but news that an unknown young Finn with an unpronounceable name is to take Simon Rattle's place at the Birmingham Symphony Orchestra is, in Finland at least, just another sign of its success as a hothouse for classical music talent, *writes Jon Henley.*

From Esa-Pekka Salonen, conductor of the Los Angeles Philharmonic, to the bass Matti Salminen, and the pianist Ralf Gothoni — hailed as the most exciting keyboard player of his generation when he won the 1994 Gilmore award in America — Finnish musicians, singers and conductors are making a global mark.

Sakari Oramo, aged 31, is the latest of a string of graduates from the country's leading conservatory, the Sibelius Academy, to win international recognition. The son of two music professors, he began as a violinist with a Helsinki chamber orchestra and leader of the Finnish Radio Symphony Orchestra.

He is considered strongest in contemporary work and has said he feels a mission to win modern classical music a wider audience — a passion he shares with Simon Rattle.

The Finnish government spends $15 million a year on grants to musicians, including composers, and orchestras. And concert halls are heavily subsidised by local authorities.

Duet in perfect harmony

Iris Murdoch and John Bayley still make a fine team. But just now she's suffering a slight block, writes **Joanna Coles**

"*BELL* not working. WE ARE HERE. Knock vigorously." I do, and the cheery face of Professor John Bayley promptly appears at the window, chewing baked beans. "Come in, come in my dears," he exclaims, opening the front door and waving an oval piece of toast. "I find beans just the thing for lunch don't you? We're not lunch people, we're dinner people, that's when we eat properly, so come in, come *in*."

He whisks us through a chaotic hall, past a vast, unsteady pyramid of books and into the most eccentric drawing room I have ever seen. There are heaving carrier bags spilling their paper guts across the floor, old stones and sticks, wild piles of books and papers which look as if they may have reproduced on their own the night before.

As we sit down, Dame Iris Murdoch spirits herself gracefully into the room, and I suddenly notice there's an abandoned glass of red wine tucked away under each armchair, as if perhaps in case of emergency.

Hello, she smiles, her eyes wide and friendly and although I have already explained on the telephone, I explain again that I'm here because there are rumours she has given up writing for good. It is not the easiest of questions to ask such an intelligent and prolific author, and I am worried she may think me rude for even trying. But can it be true?

To my huge relief she smiles. "Well, I'm trying to do something, but, it hasn't, well . . ." and then she starts laughing.

"Just a bit of a block I think," interrupts Bayley, her husband of 40 years, cheerfully.

"Yes, it's not, well, I certainly am trying," she replies.

Now 77, Dame Iris is without question one of the finest writers of her generation, to date producing 26 novels including the hugely acclaimed The Sea, The Sea, The Black Prince and The Red And The Green. Has she suffered from this kind of block before? "I think this is a very bad one," she says absently.

"It has occurred before darling," says Bayley, leaning towards her reassuringly. "You've had periods of lying fallow, as one might say, rather like a field. . . . You don't keep pompous writing hours. You simply write whenever you feel like it."

I wonder if she still reads a lot?

"Yes, I do." And do you still enjoy writing when you can?

"Well, I enjoy it, when I've found a way out, as it were. But um, otherwise . . ." and she smiles wanly, almost apologetically. "Otherwise I'm in a very, very bad, quiet place."

We are all quiet for a moment before Bayley says: "I keep suggesting she should start, in the way an ordinary person would do. You know, Tom and Dick were sitting in a pub, and who should come in but Harry."

"Oh, but I'm afraid I can't do that," says Iris quickly. "At the moment I can't find anything."

Bayley, who retired as Oxford's Warton Professor of English four years ago, heads off to make coffee. "I feel gloomy," says Dame Iris gently. Does she think this will pass, or is it simply old age?

"I think I just haven't yet got anything which will help me," she whispers, adding bravely: "I expect something will turn up."

Bayley returns bearing a tray with a pottery jug of coffee, and to make room we remove another tray smothered in corks, crisp autumn leaves, pebbles, old notes, a large stone and some photographs.

"You must pour," says Iris, patting his arm. "You must pour."

"Pour? Oh, I though you meant paw!" And he starts scrabbling at the air as if he's a cat, and we all laugh. Their relationship is not only touching, it's still fresh and young, making sense of what marriage is for. How, I ask, do they spend their days together?

"I've slipped out of the university now," says Iris. "But I do every day try and collect something or other to myself." Then she gives me a beautiful, generous smile. "Your arrival may help me."

"I wouldn't be surprised," says Bayley, spooning two sugars into each mug. "Sometimes pictures start her off. We went to the National Gallery yesterday."

"I do like pictures," says Iris.

"We discovered yesterday, didn't we darling, that the thing one must do is go in the Orange Street entrance, because you arrive among just the right sort of pictures to warm you up. Instead of being suddenly confronted with these ghastly old masterpieces, there are some very nice Dutch portraits, charming."

He beams at the memory and distributes a packet of McVitie's half-coated digestives. "One must have the dark chocolate, the milk ones are not the same. Is the coffee all right?"

I ABANDON my list of prepared questions and ask Bayley about the trilogy he's been writing since he retired. "Oh it's rather frivolous," he says dismissively. "I'm not a natural novelist like Iris. The third one, George's Lair, has just come out, but it can't be described as making a big splash."

"Oh it's jolly good," protests Iris loyally. "It's absolutely good."

"It's quiet, narcissistic entertainment for me," he explains hurriedly. "I suppose I might have taken to woolwork!"

I wonder what they make of the current vogue, where just about everyone seems to be writing a novel? "It's partly the new feminists," says Bayley, brandishng his biscuit, "who are, quite rightly, wanting to find out who they are — a faintly ridiculous phrase I know, but there's some truth to it. I had a pupil who said 'I've written a novel to find out who I really am'."



The Dame and the professor: 'I enjoy writing but . . . I'm in a very, very bad, quiet place,' says Iris Murdoch PHOTOGRAPH: EAMONN McCABE

"Writing came immediately to me," says Iris suddenly. "I had a wonderful education, I went to excellent schools [Badminton] where they knew what was possible. And as time went on, I knew with passion when I finished a novel that I wanted to do the next one."

Then she stops and remarks clearly: "I am in a place from which I am trying to get out."

We all pause, nonplussed, until Bayley eventually breaks the silence by asking me if I have written a novel. I confess gloomily that I haven't. "It's well worth trying," he says encouragingly.

"Try and find the time," says Iris. "Do. Do."

We wander out to the garden, an uproarious spread of wild mint, goldenrod, Michaelmas daisies and some old cut flowers, still in their vases. "I was very lucky," says Iris as Bayley disappears into the kitchen. "I met a man I couldn't say 'no' to, and I couldn't be persuaded to throw him away."

He returns with a flat cap on which he insists on wearing "for without it, I look like Humpty Dumpty". Despite Dame Iris's current problems, they seem utterly at ease with each other. "We've done all the things we want to, and now we have a quiet life," says Bayley.

"Actually . . ." begins Iris. "Yes, you're more restless than me," concedes her husband. And I wonder if they missed having children? "Iris has never shown the slightest interest in being a mum," says her husband.

"And I'm not sure, but you could say the best women novelists didn't have children. Jane Austen, George Eliot . . . I mean the really top notch ones."

As Iris poses obediently for photos, he beckons me over to the kitchen table, where there appear to be two of everything, two honey pots, two mustard pots, two jam pots and seven jars of coffee. "We've been to see doctors you know and they say the old brain's very crafty. It can come up against a block and for a bit things seem a bit strange, but then it finds its way around things again."

A handful in the dust

Nicola Walker

Oyster
by Janette Turner Hospital
Little Brown 402pp £14.99

The Conversations at Curlow Creek
by David Malouf
Chatto & Windus 214pp £14

ANYWHERE beyond the coastal settlements, the Australian terrain retains a primitive starkness. It has long provided a rich source of images for the country's novelists. Patrick White, Randolph Stowe, Thomas Keneally and, more recently, David Foster have all been drawn by the intensity offered by bush and desert. What these and other writers share is a recognition of the way that people have reacted to, or been profoundly altered by, the harshness of the landscape, particularly when in isolation. This feeling of being stranded in a place can either release something positive in a person or drive them mad.

The locale is crucial in two new novels, by Janette Turner Hospital and David Malouf. Hospital's apocalyptic story is set in a present-day Australia scalded by heat and dust; Malouf depicts an encounter in the verdant New South Wales bush during the 19th century.

Hospital's dysfunctional community in Oyster is governed, after a fashion, by a ragbag collection of cocky cattle-station owners, and by Bernie the pub owner and Mr Prophet the preacher. All of them are convinced that the Federal government — those "crims in Canberra" — will hand over their precious land to the "abos". With this in mind they have dodged the map-makers, the tax inspectors, indeed all bureaucracy, going so far as to "dispatch" the rare stranger who stumbles into town.

The hiccup in this rough harmony is a particularly severe drought — harbinger of the enervating old Fuckatoo, a "mephitic wind" carrying whiffs of cattle carcasses. Which is why the population of Outer Maroo (total 87), habitually gathered in Bernie's pub one afternoon, are prepared to listen to Oyster, a lean elegant figure who appears out of the dust as if by magic, promising eternal salvation in the year 2000. Most importantly, he carries a handful of high-grade opals.

What follows is the tale of Outer Maroo's Armageddon as Oyster's disciples lure unwary kids from the cities to the newly discovered reef to live "in a community of perfect harmony, each atom in the group having its perfect function". As rumours reach town of Oyster's demonic behaviour everyone turns a blind eye; but the tension escalates, culminating in the death of the school teacher who cannot stop herself asking inopportune questions. The heroine of this fraught microcosm turns out to be a shy, skinny adolescent called Mercy Given, Rover's star pupil, until the school's closure, and daughter of the former pastor — the only man in Outer Maroo to spurn Oyster.

Opal mining, sexual abuse, religious fanaticism, racism, love, Aboriginal displacement, murder, greed, a car chase, fire bombing — all are tossed in. It is a measure of Hospital's skill that the end result remains digestible.

What is a problem, however, is that much of her work is dominated by a kind of metaphorical obliqueness. It is hard not to feel dubious when Mercy throws herself out of a car going at 100 miles per hour and then likens her injuries to the brush strokes of impressionist pointillism.

The fall of David Malouf's cadences in the The Conversations At Curlow Creek is slower, and so carefully crafted that what transpires does so rather dreamily. In a dimly lit hut in the bush in 1827, two men — momentarily and arbitrarily united — find they have more in common than first appears. Carney, an Irish convict, is due to be executed in the morning, Adair is the officer sent to carry out the job. Over the course of a long night's sporadic conversation each finds solace in the other, and their awkward interdependency gives rise to questions of destiny, the law and a man's ability or inability to determine the course of his life.

Carney is the last of a band of outlaws. Led by the charismatic Dolan, they have for the past six months raided towns and roamed the bush, provoking extravagant rumours of a rebellion in the colony. Huddled round a fire outside the hut, the troopers who shot the fugitives swap insults and bawdy stories. They are made a little uneasy, not only by the loss of their mate, speared by Aboriginals, but also by their own savage retribution.

Adair, at the behest of his childhood friend and unrequited lover, Virgilia, is in Australia seeking news of his adoptive brother, Fergus, with whom Virgilia is in love. The story of this triangular friendship and of life in an eccentric country household in 19th century Ireland unfolds between breaks in the men's conversation. This merging of the Irish and Australian echoes an earlier settler history. Gradually, it seems that Fergus must also be Dolan (though Malouf never baldly says so).

Free of his mission and liberated by "some quality of the country, some effect of the high clear skies", Adair is at last, after 13 itinerant years, able to go home — and to perhaps claim Virgilia. Part of Malouf's special skill is his rendering of the carthartic possibilities of the Australian bush. Thus Carney, in the last moments of his life, cleanses the grime from his body and soul in the clear, cold waters of Curlow Creek — an intensely evocative scene, embodying that point at which the primitive merges into the mystical. The twist (Malouf has said that he is indulging "that deep feeling in all of us that we want those who are condemned to get off") is the tiniest gap in our belief that Adair has carried out his orders.

Thrillers

Chris Petit

Old Flames, by John Lawton (Weidenfeld & Nicolson, £16.99)

LAWTON writes with unashamed nostalgia for a time when pubs were pubs and Britain didn't yet swing. Old Flames is a baggy, atmospheric curiosity, sweet and sour, a compelling account of British self-loathing and self-regard. This simultaneously equivocal and clear-eyed portrait of life during the Suez crisis takes its cue from Khrushchev's 1956 visit and the unsolved footnote of the Frogman Spy, Commander Crabb. With a toff copper, Bentleys and draughty country houses, Lawton aligns himself with writers out of fashion — Allingham and Sayers. Even so, he conducts a delicate autopsy on a bullying Establishment, exposing domestic betrayals lurking at the heart of political ones, a complex bypass of lies, adulteries, and secrecy.

Count Me Out, by Russell James (Mask Noir, £8.99)

SET NOW but with a feel of the 1950s, James's dank, pasty Britain is nothing if not furtive, a place of paedophiles and surreptitious violence. At times James — whose self-appointed task is the exhaustive description of pain, mental and physical — aspires to the visionary sadism of forgotten author Gerald Kersh (Night And The City), a throwback to a milieu of fairgrounds and boxing booths, and a world that harbours few illusions apart from the sentimentality that brutality permits, seen in the odd coupling of a punch-drunk boxer and his young daughter, on the run from heavies and the social services.

The Long Run, by Ted Allbeury (Hodder & Stoughton, £16.99)

A PAST-MASTER at the chess moves of the cold war, Allbeury looks at its legacy and predicts anarchy. His Britain, its government throttled by a cynical, bear-baiting media, is close to collapse, ditto the rest of Europe, as anarchist thugs gather in back streets, ready to carry out the bidding of sinister brain-boxes who plan the downfall of Western civilisation, etc. In synopsis, Allbeury comes over as an old-fashioned alarmist. In execution, his novel is more interesting.

Vanishing Point, by Morris West (HarperCollins, £15.99)

BANKER Larry does a runner which results in his bohemian brother-in-law forsaking easel and investigating Larry's history of manic depression and the existence of an up-market travel agency that specialises in making people disappear at their own request. Discoveries include a world of first-class hotels and mildly kinky sex with improbable lesbians. The pace is dictated more by a leisurely grand tour of Europe than narrative urgency. Hero grows a beard — a sure sign of an author in trouble.

The breath of a speaking voice

Andrew O'Hagan

The Scent of Dried Roses
by Tim Lott
Viking 275pp £16

MAYBE grief is a sort of suspense. It catches you alone, and keeps you uncertain, when someone you care about goes off or dies. You know then that the future will not be the same as the past, but you have no information about just how it will differ. You are in the dark, and there's nothing to persuade you of approaching light — that things will, with time, improve.

In 1961, C S Lewis wrote A Grief Observed, an account of how he felt when his wife died of cancer. It is an arresting, unsentimental story of one person's struggle with the mad vagaries of loss and despair. "I cannot talk to the children about her," he writes. "The moment I try, there appears on their faces neither grief, nor love, nor fear, nor pity, but embarrassment . . . I can't blame them. It's the way boys are."

The Scent Of Dried Roses, by Tim Lott, comes from a new writer with much to say about the loss of his mother, and the way boys are. Lott's suburban shadowland is a different country from Lewis's, but it is also the same one. This is the sort of book which begins to make sense of some places and some people in the land, places and people who would once have been thought too normal to be the subject of a non-fiction work. In its slow and careful way, it unfolds a certain topography of melancholia, and the map Lott makes of his troubles mixes the streets he has walked in all his life with some pretty intricate places in his own mind and heart. We are left with a resounding lament for small England.

Lott's father and mother met at the Empire Snooker Hall in Ealing in 1951. Jean had beautiful hair, arched eyebrows, a tight sweater. Jack voted Labour and read the Daily Express. They married, and eventually they moved to Southall — "it had been a lovely place," says Lott, "the houses were still new and mostly immaculate. They were all much the same, built in the 1930s, with bay windows, pebble-dash, hedges, fake Tudor beams . . . Now, many of the front gardens had been concreted over to make room for secondhand Sierras or Novas."

By the time we get to "now", Jean has lost her lovely hair, she spends her days keeping the house tidy, and secretly suffers from depression. One day, after she cleared away the breakfast things, Jean went upstairs to destroy herself. She fastened up a rope, put it around her neck, and kicked away the stool.

Tim Lott: his novel chronicles an anatomy of melancholy

Jean had told her son the night before that she felt a bit down. And she told him something else. "I don't think I've been a good mother." Jean seemed to blame herself for the state of things: Tim's depression, his brother's divorce. She just couldn't go on, and that was it. But this terrible ending is as much a painful beginning for Tim Lott: he goes in search of the world that had created Jean and himself — or the world they created themselves. It is a world seen through old pictures, through the faces and shop-signs of a small country turning into a Welfare State, and reaping the wind of a colonial past.

The Southall Lott describes is a place where immigrants were to find a forbidding home, where fire was to engulf the splendour of the Crystal Palace, and where hairstyles and social ambitions and madness were heightened in the family, just as community life and health diminished with the size of skirts.

Lott's parents created a family that was in most respects like any other: they tried their best to improve things, and they wanted to be happy. "Jack and Jean furnished the living room with a maroon velour, cord-effect three-piece suite," Lott says. They wanted life to be soft and fair; it didn't turn out that way. It was harsher than the English weather.

The clouds gathered over Lott at a young age. Singing "I Vow to Thee My Country" in the classroom, the boy is somehow choked with tears. "It seems sometimes", he writes, "that I am a child whose central instinct is one of self-damage." As Jean and Jack's life settled into a constant round of dinner-dances, "activities", and television, their eldest boy begins to think only of self-slaughter. He achieves success as a journalist, but darkness engulfs him, and more of his mind is given over to the thought of death. And in this domestic crucible of unreason, we come to see that Lott is truly his mother's son.

The author is not afraid to seem selfish or unpleasant. He has been through the mill, and all his frustrations, his petty-mindedness, his aloofness, his intolerance and his moral confusion are here, just as they ought to be. Lott has managed to get at the way memory and imagination batter and repeat, inflect and compound our sense of what is happening to us, and has happened before now. The book's recreation of a suburban world, its flashing-back and forward in real time, its compilation of whispers and roars and half-remembered truths, its reliance on the intimacies of interior monologue, are bound to make some people think of fiction.

Non-fictionists and novelists have come to understand the vagueness of their respective boundaries but the newer form of memoir, especially, is one in which experience can be seen to be refracted by the passing of time and light, and where uncertainty and suspicion have their parts to play in the telling of such stories. The newer non-fiction depends upon the breath of the speaking voice, and the novelist's impulse to let life's material gather material to itself.

The Scent of Dead Roses can be ordered at the discount price of £12 from Books@Guardian Weekly

Their country right or wrong

Taylor Downing

The Controversy of Zion
by Geoffrey Wheatcroft
Sinclair-Stevenson 391pp £17.99

THERE must have been something in the water. A hundred years ago. In Paris. Three ideas that would help to define the next century were all born at the same time, in the same city. As the Lumière brothers launched their *cinématographe*, a Viennese journalist, while reporting on the trial of the French army captain Alfred Dreyfus, had a dream for solving the "Jewish Question". His name was Theodor Herzl. His dream was the creation of a Jewish state. Geoffrey Wheatcroft considers the successes and failures of a century of Zionism in this fascinating history.

In 100 years, Zionism has been beset with paradoxes. It has been opposed by many Jews. The ultra-Orthodox regard the creation of a Jewish state as a premature, man-made realisation of a divine mission. But many assimilated Diaspora Jews, such as Edwin Montagu, the only Jew in the British Cabinet at the time of the Balfour Declaration in 1917, rejected Zionism, arguing that English, French or German Jews must owe their loyalty to the country of their residence, not to that of some international tribe. Zionism has been seen as the force that saved the Jewish people after the Holocaust; as an extension of European colonialism; and by the United Nations as racist.

It is Wheatcroft's success that he analyses Zionism as an "idea in history" with clarity and balance. So much of recent Zionist studies, let alone Holocaust studies, takes Zionism out of a historical context. Wheatcroft weaves his story into the fabric of 20th century history, avoiding the hysteria that so often surrounds this subject.

A hundred years ago, Zionism must have seemed a fantastical notion. And more than anything it would have to change the desire of most Jews who wanted to migrate from going to the New World — as well over a million did in the decade after Herzl wrote — and persuade them instead to go to the Holy Land.

What is really good about Wheatcroft's book is that he confronts quite openly the fact that the destiny of Zionism has constantly been shaped by outsiders. In the 1910s and 1920s, Zionists looked to Great Britain as their sponsor, having obtained the Balfour Declaration and the creation of a mandate to encourage Jewish settlement in Palestine. In the 1940s, they convinced the United States of their cause. Wheatcroft even faces up to the deeply uncomfortable idea that perhaps the state of Israel came into being only because of Adolf Hitler.

The relationship between Zionism and the United States has proved crucial for Israel's survival. After its creation in 1948, many of the tensions within Zionism were extinguished. An informal deal was struck — all American Jews would uncritically support Israel, but few would be asked to live there. Most of the Israeli population would be made up of those who had been forced there by Polish or German persecution, or those who had been offered no other haven, the US and the rest of the West being largely closed to the survivors of Hitler's death camps. The American Israeli Public Affairs Committee, created in 1959, ensured that each American president pledged his support for Israel. Between 1966 and 1991, the US provided loans and grants totalling $75 billion to Israel.

The relationship between Israel and Diaspora Jews reached a peak with the Six-Day War in June 1967. Jews everywhere could celebrate. But the relationship reached its nadir in the eighties as Israeli soldiers shot and imprisoned Palestinian youths. Wheatcroft shows that the Diaspora Jews wanted a powerful and successful Israel, one they could be proud of, not one they had to apologise for.

WHEATCROFT'S serious omission is that he fails to consider the impact of Zionism on the Palestinian Arabs. From the beginning, some Zionists realised they would be judged by their treatment of what the Balfour Declaration bizarrely called "the existing non-Jewish communities in Palestine". But for most, the simple logic of Zionism was predicated on the mythical symmetry of "a land without a people for a people without a land". The forced expulsions of hundreds of thousands of Palestinians from their homes in 1948 and the legalised seizure of their land by the infant state questioned the morality of Israel from the beginning. And Wheatcroft sits on the fence about whether being anti-Zionist is the same as being anti-Semitic. It most certainly is not. To oppose the actions of a state is quite different from criticising the attributes of a people. This old bogy should be banished forever.

Now, after 100 years, many of Zionism's achievements exceed Herzl's dream. Israel is an established, powerful, democratic state. It will defend Jewish rights whenever they are challenged. But still the contradictions are there. After a century of settlement, there are 4 million Israelis and 2.5 million Palestinians within what was called Palestine. More Israelis leave than enter the country. Zionism was always a secular movement, but now, because of the balance of power in a divided nation, Orthodox Jewry exerts immense pressure over state policy.

As Oscar Wilde once said, there are two tragedies in life, one is not getting what you want, the other is getting it. With refreshing honesty and rigour, The Controversy Of Zion shows how Zionism succeeded not in resolving "the Jewish Question", as Herzl claimed it would, but in complicating it still further.

GUARDIAN WEEKLY
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Sports Diary Shiv Sharma

Hill's Footwork

DAMON HILL caused a sensation in the motor-racing world last week when he announced that he is to join the TWR Arrows team next year to drive one of their new Footwork cars.

The move by the current Formula One championship leader, who had been searching for a new drive after being dropped by Williams, left Tom Walkinshaw, who owns and runs TWR, chuckling with delight over his sensational coup. If Hill clinches the world championship at the Japanese Grand Prix at Suzuka on October 13, — and all the signs are that he will — it will mean that one of Walkinshaw's cars will carry the coveted No 1 from the start of next season.



Hill: joining Arrows

Hill said: "I have signed for the TWR Arrows team as their No 1 drive. Tom is best described as the archetypal racing man. I've seen his operation and I'm highly impressed."

THE brief European adventure of three of Britain's football clubs had an unhappy ending last week. Aston Villa went out of the Uefa Cup when they could manage only a goalless draw against Helsingborgs in the first round, second leg of the competition. It was the Swedish part-timers' away goal in the first encounter that proved Villa's undoing.

So obdurate was the Scandinavians' defence that the nearest the English side came to scoring was a last-minute shot by full-back Alan Wright which the Helsingborgs goalkeeper Sven Andersson tipped on to the crossbar.

Also out of Europe are Arsenal and Celtic. Arsenal lost 3-2 (6-4 aggregate) to the German side Borussia Monchengladbach and Celtic went down 2-0 to Hamburg (4-0 aggregate). Newcastle United were beaten 2-1 by Halmstads, but their earlier 4-0 victory over the Swedish side saw them through to the next round where they meet Ferencvaros of Hungary. Barry Town's brave attempt to make further progress ended when the Welsh minnows drew 3-3 with Aberdeen, who triumphed 6-4 on aggregate and now meet Brondby of Denmark.

In the Champions League, Manchester United purged any memories of their poor performance against Juventus in Turin last month and clinched a 2-0 victory over Rapid Vienna at Old Trafford. However, there was no joy for Rangers, who lost 2-1 at home to the French side Auxerre and are now bottom of their group.

Liverpool progressed to the second round of the Cup Winners' Cup by beating 3-1 their Finnish opponents MyPa-47 at Anfield to win 4-1 on aggregate. The next hurdle in their quest to win the only European trophy they have never won will be Sion of Switzerland.

On the domestic front, Everton, struggling near the bottom of the Premiership, were ousted from the Coca-Cola Cup in the second-round of the competition when they were beaten 3-2 by York City, conquerors of Manchester United last season, in the return leg, having drawn the first 1-1.

There was another upset when Sheffield Wednesday were sent packing by Division One Oxford United, beaten 1-0 last week and 2-1 on aggregate.

Manchester City, still unable to attract a manager, were also knocked out, beaten 1-0 at Maine Road after losing 4-1 in the first leg to Lincoln City of the Third Division. Among those through to the next round are Blackburn Rovers, Nottingham Forest, Coventry City, Crystal Palace, Leeds United, Middlesbrough, Sunderland and Bolton Wanderers.

FRANKIE DETTORI galloped into the record books on Saturday when he became the first horse race jockey to ride all seven winners at a British meeting. The 25-year-old Italian accomplished the feat at the Festival of Racing in Ascot on the back of Wall Street, Diffident, Mark of Esteem, Decorated Hero, Fatefully, Lochangel and Fujiyama Crest. The accumulative odds of all seven winners were over 25,000-1 and his achievement gave bookmakers their worst day since betting shops were legalised in the sixties, with a payout expected to total more than £20 million.

THE Searle brothers, Greg and Jonny, have ended their rowing partnership. The 24-year-old Greg, hoping to win a medal at the Sydney Olympics in 2000, plans to take up single sculling. The brothers produced one of the most dramatic finishes in the 1992 Games in Barcelona to win the gold in the coxed pairs and won bronze in Atlanta in the coxless fours. "It's been a tough decision not to row with Jonny," said Greg. "I'm taking a step into the unknown."

PAUL JONES, the Llanelli and Wales A lock, is facing a two-year ban after becoming only the second player in Welsh Rugby Union history to test positive for drugs. The 24-year-old admitted using steroids. The club now plans to launch its own anti-drugs drive. "We want to stamp out the use of drugs in sport and have asked our playing staff to volunteer for tests," said chairman Stuart Gallagher. South Wales Police centre Richie Griffiths failed a drugs test six year ago.

MIKE TYSON has relinquished his World Boxing Council heavyweight championship and the WBC is to invite bids for a title fight between Britain's Lennox Lewis and the American Oliver McCall.

Football Premiership: Arsenal 2 Sunderland 0

Reid rages as two are sent off

Paul Wilson at Highbury

IT TAKES talent to be boring when you are playing only nine men, and Arsenal made heavy weather of beating a depleted Sunderland. Parlour's late goal put a false gloss on some very undignified proceedings, including another manager in the FA dock following Peter Reid's dismissal.

It took the home side 73 minutes to take the lead, and 1-0 to the Arsenal would have been an entirely fitting result for this travesty of a match. On the positive side, perhaps this was just the result Arsenal needed to welcome Arsène Wenger.

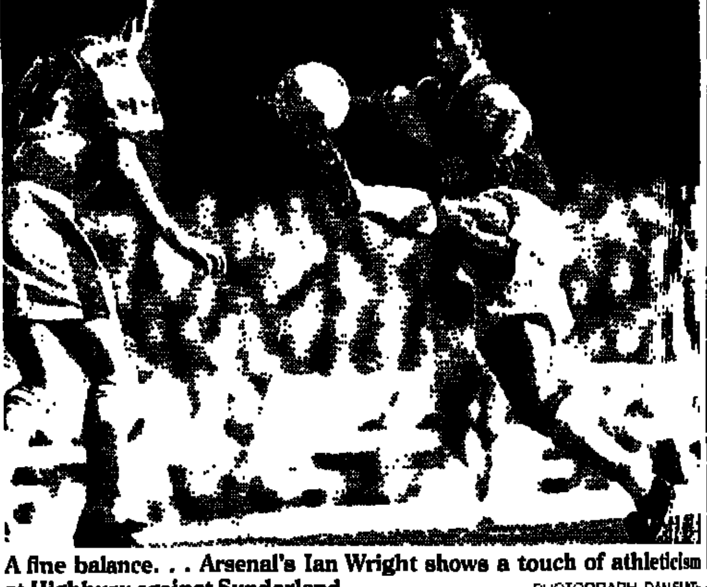
There had been optimistic talk earlier of scoring four goals or more and going to the top of the table, but a new coach likes to think he is coming to a club where there is room for improvement.

As a newcomer to the English game, Wenger might just as easily reach the conclusion that the area in most need of improvement is refereeing. He would not be the first. It must even be dawning on the apparently unconcerned mandarins of the Football Association that few spectators want to watch 11 men take on nine for the greater part of a match, and that the simmering discontent among managers over officious officials is now approaching crisis point.

Paul Danson is a famously strict referee who managed to dismiss six players and book 74 in 19 games last season; now even coaches are not safe. Reid was banished from the playing arena as he protested from the touchline over the 20th-minute dismissal of Scott.

How incandescent Reid's reaction to Stewart's sending-off 17 minutes later might have been must remain a matter of conjecture. "I was not a happy chappy," a calmer Reid said afterwards. "My reaction to the first dismissal was unprofessional, and I apologise, but it's an emotional game and you can get carried away.

"I didn't use any swear-words. I went to see the referee after the game but the police wouldn't let me in. They were guarding the door. I can't believe that — I'm such an amiable fellow."



A fine balance. . . Arsenal's Ian Wright shows a touch of athleticism at Highbury against Sunderland PHOTOGRAPH: DAN SMITH

Scott's ejection was harsh, but understandable. Stewart's was just baffling. Reid was asked whether he had ever seen a player sent off for handball in the centre circle before, but sensibly declined to comment.

Stewart had the first shot of the day after three minutes, and saw the first yellow card five minutes later after handling the ball in a penalty-area tussle with Adams. Scott followed him into the book eight minutes later for a foul on Dixon, but when the same two players went for a 50-50 ball on the halfway line, the Arsenal full-back went down in pain. Danson dismissed Scott, who went with less of a fuss than his manager. But the theatricality of the second incident obscured the innocuousness of the first.

The Sunderland man may have mistimed his challenge, but it was neither late nor from behind. "It was a great tackle," Reid said. "I didn't see a bad one in the game."

Reid withdrew Rae for defender Kubicki but Hartson, who supplied most of the punchlines in the comedy of errors which followed in the Sunderland penalty area, missed a golden opportunity to give Arsenal the lead when he failed to reach Merson's cross with his head.

Melville cleared off the line from Wright before Stewart's hand made another connection, again in an aerial challenge, but this time in an unthreatening midfield position. Mr Danson none the less reached for his pocket, and all semblance of a contest went the same way as the incredulous player.

Defending with four at the back and five strung across midfield at the start, Sunderland set out to make Arsenal's life difficult, and to their credit had shown a willingness to get forward before losing the numbers game. Sunderland did well to hold out until half-time, surviving when Hartson shot wide after a delightful passing move had opened them up. The same player missed at least two more chances at the start of the second half.

Hartson finally found the target from substitute Shaw's cross. Reid gamely threw on an extra attacker in Bridges, but it was the Gunners' substitute, Parlour, who provided a run down the right and an unstoppable shot. "Their losing two players spoiled the game," Pat Rice, Arsenal's caretaker manager, said. No one would argue. — *The Observer*

Golf European Open

It's Johansson by a late knockout

David Davies in Dublin

FIRST Paul Broadhurst threatened, then Costantino Rocca took over. Briefly, incredibly, Roger Chapman looked as if he might win and then, finally, Per-Ulrik Johansson actually did so. The convolutions of the last round of the Smurfit European Open were many and varied but, when it came to the K Club's difficult final holes, Johansson had all the answers.

After crucially parring the fiendish 16th, the Swede birdied the final two holes and went to 11 under par for a total of 277 that no one could match.

Rocca was the last man with a chance and he needed a birdie at the 18th. This is a par-five hole of only 518 yards and, additionally, downwind. It was not a particularly difficult task — there were 38 birdies and three eagles at it on Sunday from a field of 74 players — but it proved beyond the Italian. He hit a huge drive but misjudged the angle of the fairway and the ball ran on into the rough. From there he had no chance of reaching the green. His third was too well struck and pulled up 20 feet short, his putt was never on line and always too short.

It missed by a comfortable distance and Johansson had won his third European Tour event. If the final round had thrown up many possible winners, the actual one was rather surprised.

Before this week Johansson, a Ryder Cup player last year, was lying 96th in the Volvo rankings with £64,000 to his credit. As he had finished 19th and 15th in his last two years he was aware that, if he was to qualify for the Volvo Masters — as he has always done in his six years as a professional — he would need to make another £60,000 quickly.

Yet he came to this event with his confidence in tatters. He had missed the cut in each of the past two weeks and he decided on what was, for a Swede, a fairly drastic policy. "Sometimes", he said afterwards, "we Swedes spend too much time on the swing rather than just playing golf. I decided I would just scramble it around this week, and for me to win just shows what the will can do.

"I almost did not want to come here, I was playing so badly; but then, when I won the Czech Open two years ago, it was the same. Maybe when there is no expectation you can relax. You are not thinking that every bad shot is a disaster."

Johansson's season, heading for disaster by his standards, has now been rescued by this homespun philosophy, and of course by the £125,000 first prize which lifts him to 25th in the rankings and fifth in the Ryder Cup points list.

Rugby League Test Match: Papua New Guinea 30 Great Britain 32

Goulding's footwork does Lions proud

Andy Wilson in Lae

WHEN Bobbie Goulding arrived in Brisbane on Sunday no one could have begrudged him a grin a mile wide. He had steered Great Britain to victory in a combative, compelling Test match against Papua New Guinea here; and even better, he was on his way to Fiji.

Goulding was one of only five members of the Lions' squad with previous experience of touring Papua New Guinea. "I knew what to expect this time, although I wasn't expecting the deaths at a club game the day we arrived," he said. "But it has still been one of the longest weeks of my life."

The Lions spent the week cooped up in their hotel, and after Wednesday's victory over a President's XIII in Mount Hagen most were struck down by a stomach bug. So Goulding spent much of the Test countdown in the bathroom.

Yet he was one of four of Great Britain's 17-man squad to play the full 80 minutes — the full-back Stuart Spruce and three-quarters Hayes and Radlinski were the others — as Phil Larder made 26 substitutions. "If it hadn't been unlimited interchange, someone would have died out there," said the coach.

Goulding did not command this match as he had many of St Helens's games in the Super League this summer, and his opposite number, the Kumuls' captain Adrian Lam, pointed out: "He didn't run with the football at all."

However, Goulding cajoled his forwards, led superbly by the 21-year-old captain Andy Farrell, to even greater efforts in the draining heat and humidity; supported a break by his half-back partner Iestyn Harris to score a try midway through the first half; set up two more for Kris Radlinski with pin-point kicks after half-time; and landed six goals from six attempts. In contrast the Kumuls' hooker Elias Paiyo could manage only three from eight. "If you put Goulding's feet on one of our players we would have won the game," said Lam.



Happy landing . . . Lions hero Goulding crashes over for a try PHOTOGRAPH: VICTORIA MATTHEWS

PNG should have led 20-12 at half-time, Paiyo missing a straight-forward penalty and also the conversion to their first try, from Hull KR's stand-off Stanley Gene after the Bradford full-back Spruce had fumbled a Lam grubber.

Instead the gap was only four points, as Goulding converted his try and a third-minute dummy-half effort from Keiron Cunningham, with PNG scoring tries through the winger David Gomia.

So Radlinski's first try — after Daryl Powell forced the Kumuls' young full-back Robert Sio to spill a Goulding bomb — and Goulding's conversion put the Lions back ahead.

Great Britain then moved two scores clear for the first time when Powell linked with the 19-year-old debutant Paul Sculthorpe to send Anthony Sullivan over in the corner and Goulding improved the score from wide out.

PNG hit back through their prop Ben Bire but a penalty by Goulding, followed by Radlinski's second try set up by the St Helens player's cross-kick, stretched the Lions' advantage to 32-20. The Kumuls rallied again with tries from Bire and Sio, but Paiyo's touchline conversion from Sio's effort with two minutes left was too little, too late.

Football results

FA CARLING PREMIERSHIP: Arsenal 2, Sunderland 0; Chelsea 1, Nottingham Forest 1; Coventry 0, Blackburn 0; Derby County 0, Wimbledon 2; Everton 2, Sheffield Wed 0; Leicester 1, Leeds 0; Manchester United 2, Tottenham 0; Newcastle 4, Aston Villa 3; Southampton 4, Middlesbrough 0; West Ham United 1, Liverpool 2. **Leading positions:** 1, Liverpool (8-20); 2, Newcastle United (8-18); 3, Arsenal (8-17).

NATIONWIDE LEAGUE: First Division: Barnsley 1, Grimsby 3; Birmingham 0, QPR 0; Bolton 1, Stoke 1; Charlton 1, Oldham 0; Crystal Palace 6, Southend 1; Huddersfield 1, Reading 0; Norwich 1, Tranmere 1; Oxford 2, Portsmouth 0; Port Vale 1, Bradford City 1; Sheffield United 2, Manchester City 0; WBA 0, Ipswich 0. **Leading positions:** 1, Bolton (9-20); 2, Barnsley (8-18); 3, Norwich (9-18).

Second Division: Brentford 3, York 3; Bristol Rovers 2, Chesterfield 0; Burnley 2, Bristol C 3; Crewe 3, Plymouth 0; Luton 1, Blackpool 0; Notts County 0, Wrexham 0; Peterborough 6, Wycombe 3; Preston 2, Millwall 1; Rotherham 1, Bournemouth 0; Shrewsbury 1, Watford 0; Stockport 2, Gillingham 1; Walsall 3, Bury 1. **Leading positions:** 1, Brentford (9-21), 2, Millwall (9-17), 3, Crewe (9-16).

Third Division: Colchester 2, Doncaster 2; Darlington 0, Fulham 2; Exeter 0, Cambridge 1; Hartlepool 2, Chester 0; Lincoln 2, Cardiff 0; Mansfield 3, Hereford 1; Northampton 3, Brighton 0; Rochdale 1, Leyton Orient 0; Scarborough 3, Wigan 1; Scunthorpe 1, Barnet 2; Swansea 0, Hull 0; Torquay 1, Carlisle 2. **Leading positions:** 1, Fulham (9-21); 2, Carlisle (9-20), 3, Wigan (9-17).

BELL'S SCOTTISH LEAGUE: Premier Division: Dunfermline 3, Raith 1; Dundee U 1, Aberdeen 0; Hibernian 1, Hearts 3; Motherwell 1, Kilmarnock 0; Rangers 2, Celtic 0. **Leading positions:** 1, Rangers (7-21), 2, Celtic (7-16), 3, Aberdeen (7-11).

First Division: East Fife 2, Stirling Albion 2; Falkirk 1, Airdrie 1; Morton 1, St Mirren 3; Partick 1, Clydebank 0; St Johnstone 0, Dundee 1. **Leading positions:** 1, Dundee (7-14); 2, Morton (7-1[illegible]); 3, St Johnstone (7-11).

Second Division: Ayr 2, Stranraer 0; Clyde 1, Brechin 0; Dumbarton 1, Stenhousemuir [illegible]; Hamilton 2, Queen of the South 2; Livingston 2, Berwick 1. **Leading positions:** 1, Livingston (7-19), 2, Ayr (7-14), 3, Hamilton (7-14).

Third Division: Alloa 1, East Stirling [illegible]; Arbroath 0, Cowdenbeath 1; Montrose 4, Forfar 1; Queen's Park 1, Albion Rovers 1; Ross County 1, Inverness 3. **Leading positions:** 1, Albion Rovers (7-15), 2, Montrose (7-13); 3, Alloa (7-12).

Cycling Tour of Spain

Clean sweep by Swiss

William Fotheringham in Madrid

AFTER three years during which it seemed the words "If only I had not fallen off" might be permanently carved into the heart of Alex Zülle, the Swiss finally won the first major tour of his career on Sunday when the Vuelta a España finished here, with the Belgian Tom Steels winning the final stage.

Fragile, gangling and short-sighted, Zülle had failed to live up to the expectations placed on him since he temporarily took the yellow jersey during the 1992 Tour de France from none other than Miguel Indurain.

The young Swiss was immediately placed on top of the short list of potential successors to the great Spaniard, an impression confirmed the next year when Zülle won the Paris-Nice stage race, a traditional proving ground for future champions. Then came the run of close encounters with the tarmac.

He lost the 1993 Tour of Spain after sliding off a bend on a rain-soaked mountain descent, then his Tour de France was wrecked by a crash after a distracted spectator let a souvenir-filled plastic carrier bag fall into his front wheel.

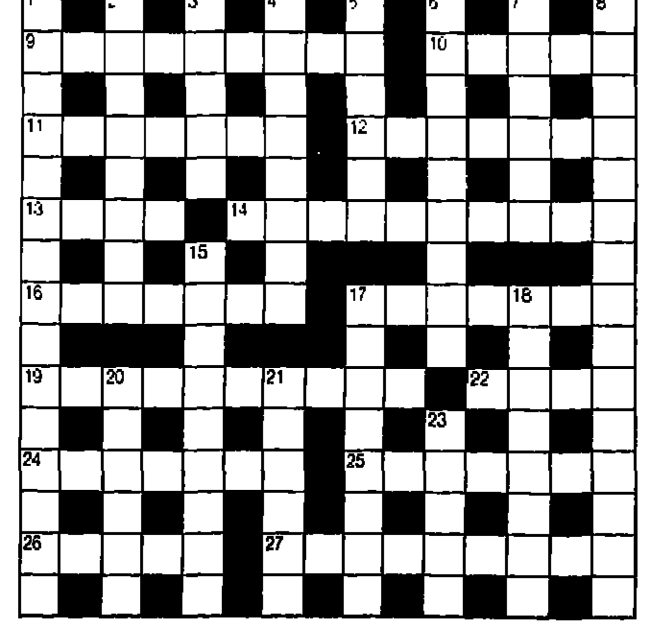
Last year Zülle finally got through a major tour without incident when he finished second in the Tour de France to Indurain, and he was widely expected to win the Vuelta. Instead, as his team-mate Laurent Jalabert rode to victory, he fell off yet again, this time as he trundled gently back to his hotel after a mountain-top finish.

"I haven't actually fallen off that often, I've just fallen off at the wrong times," the 27-year-old from the German-speaking canton of Wil said. That is an understatement: in this year's Tour de France he hit the deck twice during a crucial Alpine stage.

Zülle's luck turned during this Tour of Spain. His biggest rival, the three-times winner Tony Rominger, lost seven minutes early on after a few minutes' inattention on a windy day. Indurain, forced to ride against his will after his disastrous Tour de France, pulled out in the second week with bronchitis.

"I've always said I can win a really big race, and this will give a lot more confidence," Zülle said after leading home two compatriots, the French-speaking Laurent Dufaux and Rominger. This is the first time Switzerland has scored a clean sweep in a race of this stature and it augurs well for the home nation's chances in the world championships in Lugano later this month.

Cryptic crossword by Araucaria



Across

9 On strike and dismissed, having no qualification? (3-3-3)
10 Hello! Gosh! Listen to 17 syllables (5)
11 Henry the hundredth meets that bird of the sea (7)
12 Copper in the Round Table, 3 specialist (7)
13, 22 Packet for packet, it doesn't sound like a "she" (4-4)
14 That gorgeous one was the lady I referred to in the kitchen (4-6)
16 I belong otherwise to base (7)
17 Spoil or enjoy oneself? (7)
19 Snake gets Chief Constable (10)
22 See 13
24 Split, see below (7)
25 What's thrown with feathers will subside (3, 4)
26, 27 Political difference to recall — but we are different (5, 4, 5)

Down

1 See 3
2 Last possible beast is a horse (8)
3, 1 Unscrupulous opportunism, anathema to Cheyenne in charge of revolution (2, 3, 2, 3, 4, 6)
4 Wins crookedly in nap — it'll mean job losses (8)
5 For itself like 3 with excessively bad hat about (1, 5)
6 Lots of people maybe have Goodwin's old address (9)
7 Among swimmers, home at last (6)
8 As on the hour, forced an entry: it could be Romeo and Juliet's (15)
15 Before the engine died, the missile was a fine piece of work (5, 1'3)
17 Nudation causes inconsistency in 9, perhaps (2-3-3)
18 There's nothing right in yobbos being sentries (8)
20 Father raised sovereign for one in need (6)
21 Novelist around Blandford's first to get close (4, 2)
23 Coed village that makes the West best (5)

Last week's solution

U	S	E	L	E	S	S		P	R	O	D	U	C	E
	T		A		W		T		E		I		H	
M	E	E	T		A	F	R	I	C	A	S	T	A	R
	W		E		N		I		A		T		R	
H	A	R	R	I	S		G	E	N	E	R	A	T	E
	R				E		G		T		U		E	
A	D	V	O	C	A	T	E	S		T	S	A	R	S
			P				R				T			
F	L	E	E	T		O	F	F	E	N	S	I	V	E
	O		R		L		I		X				E	
D	O	N	A	T	I	O	N		C	A	N	A	R	Y
	K		T		N		G		I		O		O	
M	O	T	I	O	N	L	E	S	S		R	I	N	G
	U		V		E		R		E		T		A	
A	T	T	E	S	T	S		A	S	P	H	A	L	T

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